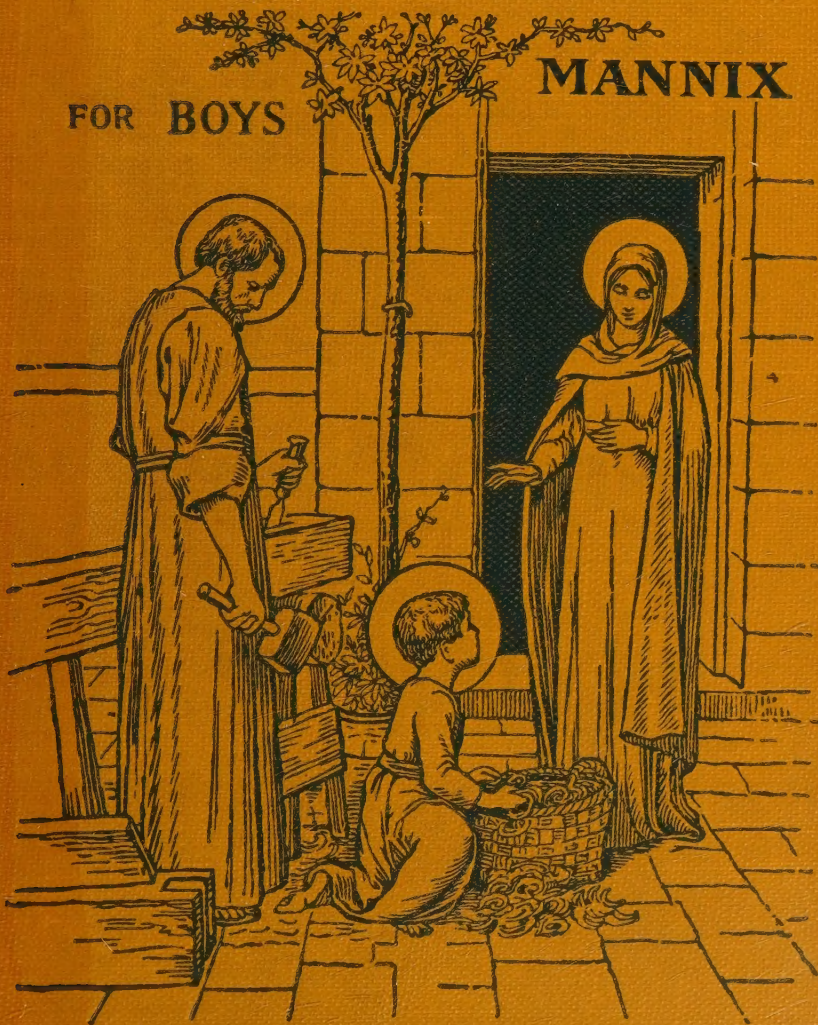


ILLUSTRATED LIVES OF PATRON SAINTS

FOR BOYS

MANNIX



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ILLUSTRATED LIVES
OF
PATRON SAINTS FOR BOYS

By
MARY E. MANNIX

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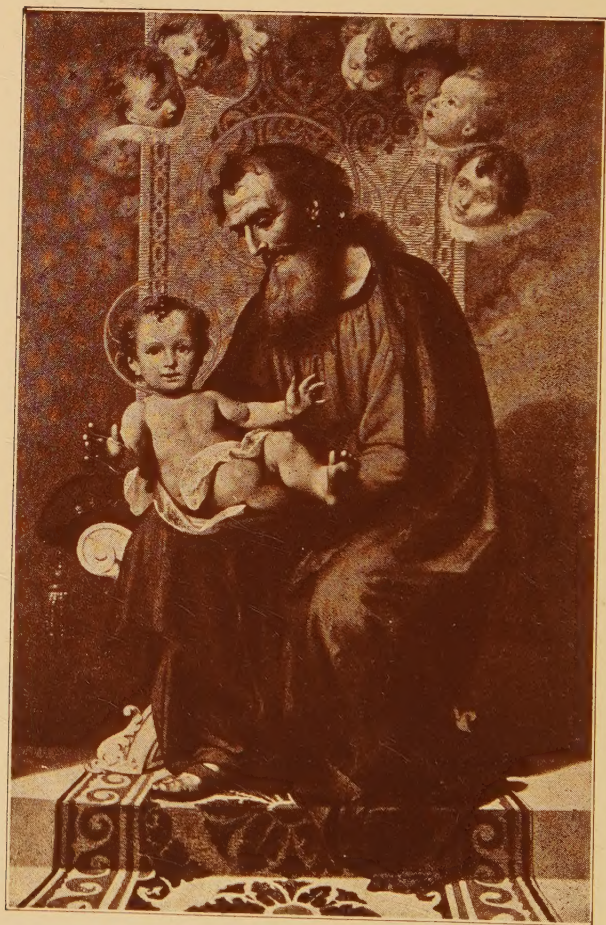
Archbishop of New York

New York, November 6, 1905

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ST. JOSEPH.

PATRON SAINTS

ST. JOSEPH

WE know very little of the life of St. Joseph. It was a hidden life, and hidden lives are often holy. At the same time we know that he was a "just man," which means that he was as perfect as any one can be in this world.

Like the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph belonged to the royal family of David, from which the prophet had predicted that the Messiah would be born. Although of kingly descent, St. Joseph was a tradesman, a carpenter, earning his bread by the sweat of his brow. Whether rich or poor, it was the custom among the Jews for every man to learn a trade, so that if

poverty should come, they would be able to meet it. It would be a very good thing if such was still the case; there would not then be so many idle, useless persons standing about the streets. St. Joseph was poor, for Our Lord wished to set an example of poverty, and so chose a man for his foster-father whose hands were hard from toil.

There is a beautiful legend told of St. Joseph, which shows how the Lord regarded him. When, after her sojourn among her young companions in the Temple, the time had come to choose a husband for Mary, there were a great many suitors for her hand, and, as was usual among the Jews, each carried a staff. The High Priest, not knowing how to decide between them, prayed to God for a sign that he might know the one who was the best among them. They were then told to leave their staffs all

night in the Sanctuary of the Temple. They did so, and in the morning, at every knot of the wooden staff which belonged to St. Joseph, a lily had sprouted, and it looked like a beautiful sheaf of flowers. The rest remained barren and dry. This legend is also told in another way. It is said that as the proposed suitors were assembled in the Temple awaiting the decision of the High Priest, he saw a dove fly upward from the point of St. Joseph's staff, which at once became covered with beautiful white lilies. Hence it is that he is always thus represented — holding a lily in one hand.

There is still another Eastern legend which relates that on the day when the young Jewish maidens, of whom Mary was one, assembled in the Temple to meet the husbands which it was the custom of the High Priest to select for each, Mary came last in the group, carrying a sprig of

blossoming almond in her hand. She had plucked it in the garden as she passed.

Raising her lovely eyes from the ground, they met those of St. Joseph. In them she read all that she would have desired to see in the soul of him who was to be the protector of the Chastity to which she had vowed herself. Joseph, on his side, at once singled her from among all the other maidens, as the fairest and sweetest of the group, but his heart grew heavy when he remembered that the choice was not likely to fall on him, as he was the oldest among the suitors, being over forty, while Mary was only fifteen.

But suddenly, looking down at his staff, he saw that the most beautiful and fragrant almond blossoms had sprouted from it. Every one there was witness to the miracle, and the betrothal of Mary and Joseph at once took place.

It is at Nazareth that we first meet St. Joseph in the Gospel. It was, and still is, an obscure town of Galilee. The name signifies flower or branch. Within its walls were to bloom the fairest and sweetest flowers the world ever knew, Jesus and Mary. Coming from Jerusalem, the little town may be seen from the hills of Samaria. Its gray houses, with their flat roofs, are the same now as they were then. Here Mary and Joseph dwelt in peace and love.

At that time the Emperor Augustus ordered that the census of his Empire be taken. It was not enough for the people to send their names; they were obliged to go to their native town if they lived away from it; husband and wife both were compelled to go. Joseph was a native of Bethlehem, and, according to the law, had to enroll his name there.

From Nazareth to Bethlehem was, at that time, a journey of three or four days. They went mostly in caravans; that is, companies of persons from the same place would travel together. Nearly every family in Palestine owned a donkey, as they still do. Only the very poorest people traveled on foot. We are to suppose that Mary and Joseph remained with their friends and relatives till they came to Bethlehem. The town, being small, was very crowded at this time, and people hurried to find places to lodge. But no such place could be found for Mary and Joseph, — they were poor, they could not pay much, “there was no room for them in the Inn.” Bethlehem lies two leagues south of Jerusalem, above the plains of Rephaim, in the very heart of Judea’s hills. In these hills are many small caves, often used as stables for cattle, and in one of them Mary and

Joseph at last found shelter for the night. Here, at midnight, Our Lord was born. What a task of love it must have been for Joseph to watch over the Child and His Mother!

Some time later an Angel came to Joseph in his sleep, and bade him take Jesus and Mary and fly with them into Egypt. King Herod had sent his soldiers to kill all the children under two years of age that they would find, as he wished to make sure that the new-born King, of whom the Wise Men had told him, would thus be gotten rid of. Joseph did not wait till the next day to do as the Angel had commanded. He rose at once, waked Mary, wrapped her mantle about her, in which was hidden the Babe of Bethlehem, and, leading the donkey by the bridle, went forth in the dead of night to Egypt. It is said that the Holy Family lived in the midst of a Jewish

colony near Memphis. The next year Herod died, and once more the Angel came to Joseph and bade him go back to his own country. There is a legend of this departure from Egypt which tells of a date tree, planted by the hand of the Infant Jesus, which bore fruit for centuries after. When the Holy Family was about to depart, their neighbors gathered around them, and besought them not to go, loading them with gifts of fruits and nuts when they found they could not prevail upon them to stay. The Infant Jesus was eating a date, and when he had finished, threw the stone to the ground.

“We must go,” said Joseph, “but we will leave you a memory which shall never fail.” Then taking the Child from the arms of His Mother, he stooped and bade Him pick up the stone He had thrown to the earth. The Child did so.

"Now put it in this hole," said the foster-father, scooping up a little earth. The Infant Jesus dropped the stone in the hollow, and presently a green sprout appeared above the ground. The people were amazed. "Whatsoever this Child touches shall live and thrive," said Joseph. And the date tree grew and flourished, bearing the finest and most nutritious fruit.

When the Holy Family returned to Nazareth, the house in which they lived was similar to those in which dwell the people of the place to-day. It was a square building, of brick or stone, the roof flat, with an outside railing reached by a ladder, which could be moved at will. Close to it was the carpenter shop. This carpenter shop was the first, perhaps the only, school of Jesus, where, as he planed and sawed, Joseph spoke to him of God, and taught him the Scriptures, at

the same time teaching him to make plows, harrows, chairs, tables, and stools.

When Jesus was twelve he was lost for three days, and we can fancy the trouble that filled St. Joseph's soul when he could not be found. After this time we hear no more of the guardian and protector of Our Lord, but it is believed that he died before Jesus began his public life.

There are many lessons to be learned from the life of St. Joseph. He was poor, and God loves the poor. He was humble, and to be humble is to possess the greatest of virtues. He had much to suffer both in body and mind during the time he lived on earth. It was his duty to take care of the two most precious jewels that had ever shone amid the darkness of the world; these jewels were Jesus and Mary. His days were a mixture of fear and joy. Fear lest something should befall his treasures — joy

that he had been chosen to shelter them under his roof.

“Labor and Prayer” was the motto of his life. He joined one with the other; together they made perfection. We can always make our work a prayer. To offer every act of the day to God when we rise is to begin it well; it is to make a prayer of all we do until we lie down at night again.

St. Joseph was a silent man. We have no sayings of his on record in the Gospel. He was not a curious man. He asked no questions of the Angel at any time, but did the bidding of God’s messenger at once and entirely.

He is the Patron of a Happy Death, because, in the first place, he lived such a life that he could not help but die well, and, secondly, he died in the arms of Jesus and Mary, where we would all wish to breathe our last sigh. Volumes could

not contain the wonderful favors which are obtained through St. Joseph. Two of these which we are about to relate are neither traditions nor legends; they have occurred during the past twenty years. St. Joseph is always ready to befriend his clients, and God is always ready to hear him. He cannot refuse anything to the father and guardian who now sits at His right hand in Heaven.

A young man named Joseph had led a good life until the age of twenty. From his childhood he had been devout to his Patron. When he left school he fell into the company of persons who led evil lives, and little by little he began to do as they did. Among other things, he learned to drink, and soon became so fond of liquor that he seldom passed a day without being intoxicated. At last, all his friends knew him for what he was, a common drunkard.

He went to the Sacraments no more;

to Church never. Thus several years passed, and one day while he stood in front of the Cathedral watching a man haul a flag to the top of the spire, a sudden impulse led him to enter. He fell on his knees, the tears came to his eyes, and he began to sob and weep. He rose at length and went home, throwing himself on his bed, as he had felt ill all day. The next morning he could not get up; he refused, however, to take a drop of the wine which his sister offered him to steady his nerves. From that time he would not taste it. He never left his room again; he had been seized with quick consumption, caused by his bad habits. He lived three months longer. Between midnight and morning each day he would never take anything to quench his thirst. He would say, "I have sinned through thirst, and thus I shall repent and suffer." On the morning of the Feast of St. Joseph

he said, "I think St. Joseph will come for me some time to-day." He died at midnight. Later it was learned that he had told his confessor he had never failed through the evil years to say, morning and evening, "St. Joseph, help me." His holy Patron had not deserted him.

A man, also named Joseph, had once been rich, but had become very poor. He was not pious, but once in a while said a short prayer to his Patron. At last he was reduced to his last dollar and made up his mind to kill himself. In order to do this he bought laudanum and went to a park near the city, where he drank the contents and lay down to die, saying, "St. Joseph, ask God to forgive me." But the dose was not enough to kill him. Instead he fell into a profound sleep and saw what he always said was a vision, though others might call it nothing but a dream. In any case it happened well. In this

dream or vision he saw an old man coming towards him, reaching out his hand. The dreamer took it, and the old man, whom he knew to be St. Joseph, said, "Come with me." He followed, and the stranger led him into a foreign land, which looked like pictures he had seen of Jerusalem. Then he showed him all that had happened to Our Lord on Good Friday, from the House of Pilate to His death on the Cross. After this St. Joseph turned to him and said, "Jesus Christ died to save the soul you wish to damn this day," and disappeared.

The man awoke, once more took up his burden, and thanked God and his holy Patron, promising to live a good life for the future. He kept his word and soon found a good situation.

Two little children, who had been taught by their good mother to love St. Joseph, and who lived on the borders of a forest,

where their father worked as a wood-cutter, once begged to be allowed to take his dinner to him, as their baby brother was ill and the mother did not like to leave him. There were several paths leading through the forest. "My dears," said the good woman, "take the basket between you, as it is heavy, and go straight on until you come to the big oak that was struck by lightning; from that place you can easily hear the stroke of your father's ax. Follow the sound and you will soon find him. May Jesus, Mary, and Joseph protect you."

Full of joy at being permitted to go on this errand, the children started. For some distance all went well. They kept to the path, laughing and singing. When they came to the old oak tree, they put the basket on the ground, for they had begun to feel tired. All was still. It was the noon hour, and even the birds seemed to be resting from their songs.

They turned to the right, then to the left, but heard no sound of ax or crash of falling tree. They were afraid to go out of sight of the oak lest they should lose their way.

"We cannot stay here," said the boy, at length. "Papa will be hungry, and his dinner will be cold."

"But what shall we do?" answered the girl; "we cannot hear him; he must have gone away."

All at once they heard a faint sound in the distance, and, thinking it was the noise of felling a tree, they took up their basket once more and went in the direction of the sound.

But after they had gone farther and farther into the forest, they heard it no more, and by this time there were so many little paths made by the wood-cutters in their labors that they could not find their way out again. They sat down

on the thick carpet of fallen leaves and looked at each other in dismay.

After a while the girl began to cry and said she was hungry. They opened the basket and ate part of what had been meant for their father's dinner. When they had finished, the sun was quite low in the sky.

"Let us pray to St. Joseph," said the boy, falling on his knees. His sister did the same, and both felt comforted. Hardly had they seated themselves on the leaves once more, when, without sound of footfall or rustle of branches, an old man appeared. It seemed as though he must have risen out of the ground.

He wore a brown cloak, but no head-covering of any kind. In one hand he carried a staff. His hair and beard were white, his eyes dark and kindly; he smiled upon them, motioning them to rise.

"It is St. Joseph!" they both exclaimed.

But the stranger did not speak. Still smiling, he made a sign that they should accompany him. They did so, and in a very short time they had wound in and out through the labyrinth of trees once more, and were at the edge of the forest, in sight of their own home, just in time to meet their father and some neighbors setting out in search of them. But when they turned to thank the old man who had led them out of the wood, he was gone. As no one knew of any such person in those parts, the villagers all agreed with the children that it must have been St. Joseph.

“I was once leaving a tenement house to which I had been summoned in an unfamiliar part of the city,” said a missionary, “when I heard a voice feebly calling from a room I was passing on my way down the rickety stairs. I am a Frenchman, as you know, though for many

years a resident of America. There were not many of my countrymen in L——, and I was a little surprised to hear some one ask in my own tongue: ‘Who is that? Who goes there?’

“‘I am a priest,’ I replied. ‘May the peace of God descend upon this house, and all who dwell therein.’

“‘A priest!’ cried the voice through the half-open door. ‘Come in, Father. Come in quickly.’

“I entered. On the bed lay an old man, evidently dying. ‘Father,’ he said, ‘I cannot speak a single word of English. The people of the house cannot understand me, nor I them. I have thought myself to be dying; now I know it, because you are here. I have always been sure that St. Joseph would not let me die without the priest.’

“I heard his confession. He had been a soldier in the French army, and had led

the usual life of soldiers. After he had finished I said:—

“‘You have been accustomed to pray, no doubt, in some fashion during your career, to have merited this favor before death.’

“‘No, Father, I have not prayed,’ he said, ‘but I have asked St. Joseph to pray for me. I have worn a medal in his honor all my life, and have also belonged to a Confraternity for a Good Death.’

“‘You have reason to thank God,’ I said.

“‘If it had not been for St. Joseph,’ he replied, ‘I would have been left to die as I have lived, like an animal. But I have always been confident that he would be near me at the last.’

“‘What is your name?’ I inquired.

“‘Joseph Dupré,’ he replied.

“‘Ah, then,’ said I, ‘you certainly

have a double claim on the good Saint. He could never have deserted you. Besides, he is the Patron of a Happy Death.'

"'Ah! well do I know that,' he answered. 'And well do I remember how my poor old mother used to say, "Joseph, you are a very bad boy, but your blessed Patron is going to stand by you at the end." ' He died next day."

Joseph in the Old Testament was a type of Joseph in the New. "*Ite ad Joseph*," ("Go to Joseph,") said Pharaoh to his people in the Old Testament, when they came to him during the seven years of famine for corn. Joseph was his Prime Minister, who had provided for their needs during seven years of plenty, and he was now ready to help them when they clamored for food. "*Ite ad Joseph*," says Our Lord, for St. Joseph is his Prime Minister in Heaven. Nothing that he asks will be denied, for God is a just

and generous and grateful God. To the father who held Him in his arms during the Holy Infancy, who led His first steps during childhood, who was at once His guardian, protector, and adorer, He can refuse nothing. Let us be faithful to St. Joseph, and he will never abandon us.



ST. ALOYSIUS.

ST. ALOYSIUS

WHEN we think of the plains of Lombardy, we picture to our minds a beautiful country in the north of Italy, rich in groves and fruits, and inhabited by a brave and handsome people, having all the grace and courtesy of the Italians, with the sturdy common sense of the Germans.

It was in the Castle of Castiglione in Lombardy that St. Aloysius was born. Ferdinand Gonzaga, his father, and Marta, his mother, were the Count and Countess of Castiglione. His father was a brave and honorable soldier; his mother, a very pious woman, had been maid of honor to Isabel, wife of Philip the Second

of Spain. On the 9th of March, 1568, the child who was later to be known as the Patron of Youth all over the Catholic world first opened his infant eyes. His mother did not leave him to the care of servants; she took charge of him herself.

The holy names of Jesus and Mary were the first words she taught him to speak; he could make the sign of the cross before he could walk, and even at that tender age he was fond of clasping his tiny hands together in the attitude of prayer. As soon as he was able to run about alone, he would sometimes be missed by his mother, who nearly always found him praying in some quiet corner or secluded place. The Hail Mary was the prayer he liked best; he seemed never tired of repeating it. Once, when asked if he really loved Mary, he looked up surprised, as he answered, "Of course, is she not my Mother?"

Nothing pleased him so well as to be allowed to visit and assist the poor. He would leave his play at any time to go with his mother to see a sick person. As the son of a nobleman, he had the finest clothing and every luxury at his command, but he dressed simply, ate little, and lived even while still a child the life of a saint.

Although full of life and of a sweet disposition, his mind was mature beyond his years. Very early he began to realize what sin was, and hated it in every form.

When he was about six years old, his father, who wished him to become an officer in the army, thought it would be well to let him see a drill, hoping thus to inspire him with a love for arms and a military life. The child enjoyed it very much, and even walked in front of the corps, carrying a little pike on his shoulder, and keeping step to the martial music of the band. He remained some months at

Casal, where the troops were encamped, and while there learned some wicked words, the meaning of which he did not understand. When he returned home, his tutor heard him repeat them, and chided him for it, explaining how bad they were. Aloysius never forgot this, felt it to be a great sin, and bewailed it to the end of his life. One might say that such sorrow was too great, as he had not understood that the words were wrong. But, after all, it shows us the innocent beauty of his soul, and that from the very first moment of his coming to the use of reason he might be called a saint.

At the age of seven he could read well, and began every day to recite the Office of Our Lady, the Seven Penitential Psalms, and other prayers on his knees, on the hard floor, without a cushion, and this he did all the days of his life.

Once, while still very young, he suffered

from ague, for a period of eighteen months, and at that time, when unable to pray himself, he would have some one daily recite for him the usual prayers.

We hear of only one other fault of which Aloysius was guilty during his whole life, and that was not great. While with his father in camp the soldiers were in the habit of going to sleep after dinner. One day the Count was suddenly awakened by the noise of a gun. He jumped to his feet and ran out, thinking some enemy at hand. But it was only the little Aloysius, who had taken some powder from the pouch of a soldier lying asleep on the ground, loaded a small cannon with it, and set it off. His father was angry, and would have punished him severely had not the captain begged him to forgive the boy, who had shown great courage in what he had done, being not yet seven years old.

In after years, when he knew the difference between right and wrong, Aloysius was never tired of lamenting that on that occasion he had taken powder which did not belong to him, calling it a theft.

When he was between eight and nine years of age, as was the custom in those days, his father sent him and his younger brother, Ralph, to the Court of Francis de Medicis, Grand Duke of Tuscany, that they might learn the Latin and Tuscan tongues, and be brought up, with other boys of their own age and rank, in a manner which would fit them for their future life. One day, about this time, he was given a pious little book, on the Rosary, and much as he had loved his Blessed Mother before, he became still more devoted to her.

At the age of twelve he received his First Holy Communion, from the hands

of the great St. Charles Borromeo. For some time before, he read only books relating to the Blessed Sacrament, and in every way prepared his soul for the Bread of Life, which was ever after to be his sweetest nourishment. At this time he made an earnest study of his faults, and found that the principal one was impatience, which he began to fight against with all his might, and soon conquered. We have his own words for this, though others did not know he had such a fault.

He went to Holy Communion often; later in life every Sunday, dividing the rest of the week into two parts: Thursday, Friday, and Saturday he prayed to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost for grace to receive worthily; Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday he thanked God for the graces he had received on Sunday.

There was, in a church in Florence, a

beautiful picture of the Blessed Virgin, which St. Aloysius loved, and before which he used to pray. It showed the Angel Gabriel announcing to Mary that she was to be the Mother of Our Lord. One day, as he knelt before the painting, he vowed to his dear Mother that he would always remain pure and chaste, and she received his vow. It is said that those who knew him best declared that St. Aloysius never felt the least temptation against purity.

Aloysius remained in Florence until he was eleven years and eight months old. Young as he was, he had already made up his mind to give up his title of Count to his younger brother, Ralph. He wished to renounce the world, and that he could not do if he should succeed to the title of his father. But as yet he said nothing of this to any one, and went about his various duties as before.

Some time after, he found a book con-

taining certain letters of Jesuit missionaries from India, and at once began to wish and hope that he might be permitted to enter the Society of Jesus.

He also made a practise of going about to the schools of Christian Doctrine, helping poor boys, encouraging them, and hearing their Catechism. At this time he was not more than thirteen years old. Six months later his father took him to Spain, where he and his brother were made pages to the King. So wonderful was his piety and purity that it became a saying among the other pages that Aloysius did not seem to be made of flesh and blood. His father did not approve of his conduct, and at length Aloysius, in view of his wish to become a Jesuit, thought it was time to ask the consent of his parents so that his brother might be educated to take his place.

One day he said to his father: "Father,

I do not wish to lead the life of a prince any longer."

In surprise the Count replied: "What do you mean? What do you wish to do?"

"I wish to be a Jesuit," said the boy.

"A Jesuit!" exclaimed his father. "Are you mad?"

But his mother, who was present, rejoiced exceedingly.

"You are a fool," cried the Count. "If you persist in this purpose, I will have you scourged naked."

"Oh, that it would please God to grant me so great a favor as to suffer that for his love!" said Aloysius, and the Count felt ashamed of his threat. But the boy persisted, and after a time his father gave his consent.

The young prince of Spain having died, Aloysius and his brother were at liberty to return home. When he reached Castiglione, he had new troubles to contend

with. Cardinals, bishops, and courtiers begged him to change his mind, telling him that God had placed him in a high position in life, and that he could serve Him as well by holding it as by becoming a religious. But Aloysius was firm, and many of them were won over to his side.

And then came a new phase in his father's conduct towards him; again he forbade him to leave the Court, and treated him with great severity. But the beautiful humility of Aloysius at last prevailed, at the foot of the crucifix, before which the boy had thrown himself. The Count gave his consent, saying:—

“Dear son, your choice is a deep wound in my heart. I have ever loved you, as you always deserved. In you I had founded the hopes of my family, but you tell me God calls you another way. Go, therefore, in His name, whither you please, and may His blessing everywhere attend you.”

Aloysius went to Rome and became a novice of the Society of Jesus at the age of eighteen. When he was shown the cell which was to be his future home, he was filled with joy and cried out with the prophet, "This is my rest forever; here will I dwell, for I have chosen it."

Once an inmate in the Novitiate, Aloysius did not mortify himself as severely as before, because he was obliged to obey the rule. But he did everything he could to make himself the least among his companions. He spoke but little, did not seem to know what he ate, and never noticed any of the ornaments of the churches where he prayed; he thought only of the altar where God awaited him. It was his greatest delight to carry a wallet through the streets, begging from door to door, to sweep the kitchen and carry away the garbage. He had a great devotion to his Angel Guardian, who, he

used to say, ever walked by his side, keeping him from sin, mistakes, and accident.

Six weeks after he took the habit his father died. It was a pleasure to Aloysius to know that ever since he had entered the Society the Count had passed his life in works of piety.

Sometimes young novices are so fervent and so fearful of disobeying the rule that they become too rigid, one might say. Aloysius was so prompt, so humble, so silent, so studious, that the Master of Novices feared he was doing too much, and also wished to learn if his humility was sincere.

Therefore, he told Aloysius one day that he must talk more during recreation, instead of studying and praying, and that he must even continue to do this for half an hour longer than the others, with those who ate at the second table.

Aloysius did so. The father minister,

not knowing the reason for this conduct, punished Aloysius, and obliged him to confess his fault aloud. He did so at once, without trying to excuse himself. Afterwards, when his Superior learned of his own mistake, he was very sorry. But Aloysius, with his usual sweetness and good temper, did not seem to be aware that anything unjust had been done to him.

During the last year of his studies in Rome, he chose for his room a dark and very small chamber near the roof, having only one window. In it were a bed, a wooden chair, and a stool on which he kept his books. In the palace of his father there were warmth and light and beauty, servants in great numbers, and the choicest food; but Aloysius did not care for any of these. He did not seem to miss them. His joy was to dwell beneath the roof in his poor little room, wearing a patched garment of thin black

nerge and eating coarse food, hardly enough to keep the life in his body.

One day, while he was praying, he heard a voice telling him he had not long to live. This filled him with delight; he spoke of it to several persons, who paid no attention to it. But it was soon to come to pass.

In 1591 the plague appeared in Rome. The Jesuits opened a hospital, and all took their turn in serving there. Aloysius begged to be allowed to do the same, and although his request was at first refused, because of his delicate health, he was finally permitted to do so. He was a perfect nurse, never tired, never discouraged. He waited upon the sick, made their beds, and helped to prepare them for death, as nearly all the patients died. At length he fell ill himself, and believing that his hour had come, he joyfully made ready to die. But God did

not wish to grant the prayer of his heart so soon.

He grew better, yet not well; a low fever clung to him, and he became very weak. Even then he would get up in the night to pray before a crucifix, till, having been found doing so, he was ordered not to leave his bed. Always obedient, he did not again do so, but found other ways of punishing his pure body, which had never known the horror of sin.

He had to take some very bitter medicine; while others who were near him in the infirmary drank it in one draught, to get rid of the taste, Aloysius took it sip by sip, and never made a sign of disgust. This was in memory of the thirst of Our Lord on the Cross. Slowly but surely the angelic youth was fading out of life, and those who watched beside him soon gave up all hope. But the prospect filled the young novice with joy — he was about

to meet his Lord, who had died for him upon the Cross, to whose Passion he had such a great devotion. He was soon to clasp the hand of that loving and beloved Mother to whom he had consecrated the flower of his childhood and youth, and who had rewarded him with the grace of perfect purity of body and soul. He foretold that he would die on the Octave of the Feast of Corpus Christi, and several times asked that the *Te Deum* be said in thanksgiving. But on that day he seemed better. While those who loved and tended him were rejoiced at this, Aloysius still smiled and said: "You shall see. I will die to-day." And so it proved. About midnight he suddenly grew worse, and after saying, "Lord, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," he continued to repeat the holy name of Jesus. With this blessed name on his lips, he expired a little after midnight, on the 21st of June,

the Octave of Corpus Christi, being a little over twenty-three years of age.

His body lies in a chapel of the Jesuits' Church in Rome, and the room in which he prayed and worked is still shown in the Jesuit College.

A great many miracles have been worked through the intercession of St. Aloysius. The following account of the manner in which he assisted a tempted soul cannot fail to interest our young readers.

A certain young man, a novice in the Society of Jesus, suddenly became tired of study and prayer, and made up his mind to leave. He told his confessor of his resolve, but the priest, a pious old man, who felt sure the boy had a real vocation, advised him to remain, telling him it was only a temptation of the devil. But the youth would not give up his intention, and arose one night, tied up

some few things in a handkerchief, and stole out when every one was asleep. At the gate he paused a moment, loath to leave the place he had once thought to make his earthly home forever.

“St. Aloysius, direct me,” he cried, almost without knowing what he was saying. At that moment, a young man, dressed in the habit of the Jesuits, suddenly appeared in front of him. An instant before the runaway had glanced in the moonlight down the long, straight road, but not a soul was in sight. It was nearly midnight — which of the novices could be abroad at that hour? But while he was thus thinking and wondering, the young man, tall, slender, graceful, and with an angelic face, linked one arm in his, and with the single word, “Come,” led him up the long avenue.

After that he remembered no more, till, as the four o'clock bell began to ring for

the household to arise, he found himself lying at the foot of the altar steps in the Novice's Chapel, with his bundle by his side.

Whether he had stopped there to pay a final visit before leaving the college, and fallen asleep, or whether he had really gone as far as the gate, and the Patron of novices had answered his prayer, of course was never known; but the young man always believed that St. Aloysius had come to his aid. He afterwards became a good priest and famous preacher, whom many of your fathers and mothers have often seen and heard in the pulpit.

Before concluding, we will relate another incident of the protection of St. Aloysius. All our young readers know that he is also the Patron of scholars. At one time a prize was offered in one of the Jesuit Colleges for the best essay on Christian Doctrine. A boy who had

always held a high place in the class was very anxious to win this prize, but there were so many others who wrote better compositions than he that he feared to make the effort. Time passed, the day was at hand, and he had done nothing. He was a German boy, could not speak English very well, and at length resolved he would not try. Thinking of the matter, which gave him a good deal of anxiety, he retired to rest, and, falling asleep, had a dream. He thought St. Aloysius came to him, put a pen in his hand, and said, "Get up, Frederick, and write your essay." The boy awoke, left his bed, dressed himself, and spent the remainder of the night writing. He had no trouble in putting his thoughts to paper, and before he went to school that day the essay was nearly done.

He received the longed-for prize, the judges saying that though the language

was not quite as good as that of some of the others, he knew the subject more thoroughly. That boy is now a priest also, and an ardent client of St. Aloysius.

There is something especially attractive to children and young people in our pure and lovely Saint. They should always go to him when in trouble about anything which concerns their studies — he will help them and make the hard road easy. Side by side with their Guardian Angel he daily walks with them, protecting them from danger and sin. To his care they should entrust their innocence, begging him to preserve them from every evil of soul and body.

You might say, after reading his Life, "He was born good, he was always a saint." It is true he was good from his cradle, but he was not always a saint. It takes a great many years, and a great deal of labor at the soil of one's soul, to

complete a saint. He had few faults, but there were the seeds of some in his heart, as we have already seen. When very young, he learned from things which occurred that he was easily made angry. Instead of giving way to this fault, he did all he could to correct it, and he did correct it, so that he was known as a model of meekness. The child who imitates St. Aloysius need not fear but that he will be guarded from many things which make the path of life a danger and a snare. Children, love this dear Saint, pray to him, never fail to ask him to intercede for you in all your little trials. He will never fail you.



ST. ANTHONY

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

IT is doubtful whether, in the whole world, especially in Catholic countries, there is a name more universally used than that of Anthony, and if we ask ourselves the reason of this, there can be but one answer. It is because the Saint for whom so many are called is honored and loved from pole to pole. It is because of the widespread devotion to the dear, good St. Anthony, often called "the Wonder Worker," on account of the great and numerous miracles he performed during life and still performs every day.

What Catholic child is there who does not know and love the sweet, familiar

picture of the Saint, in his humble Franciscan habit, his face filled with joy and love as he clasps the Infant Jesus to his breast in that seraphic vision wherein Our Lady appeared to him, and, bending down, placed the Divine Child in his arms?

And yet, beloved as he is by all children, we doubt if many of them are aware that his baptismal name was not Anthony at all, but Fernando, or, as we call it in English, Ferdinand.

St. Anthony was the son of Don Martin and Teresa de Bouillon, grandees of Portugal. It is said that their ancestor was Godfrey de Bouillon, that noble Crusader of whom enough truth, poetry, and romance has been written to fill a great many books. It cannot be denied that virtue as well as talent is remarkable in certain families, and the father of Ferdinand was noted for both. At the time of the birth of his son he was

governor of Lisbon, and lived there, with his wife, Doña Teresa, in a beautiful palace near the Cathedral.

Ferdinand was born on the 15th of August, 1195, a flower that blossomed on one of Our Lady's loveliest Feasts. She early chose him for her own. Her name was the first word he uttered; as a child, he placed himself under her protection, and from his infancy the sight of a painting or statue of her whom he called his second mother always gave him the greatest delight.

Fernando seemed chosen from his birth to be a chosen Child of God. He loved nothing so well as prayer, he never lost his temper, he never told a falsehood; he was always meek and gentle. Beautiful in form and feature, talented and gifted in a wonderful degree, he never had a thought of pride or vanity; he loved everybody and was beloved by all.

It is said that on one occasion, while he was kneeling at the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin in the Cathedral, his eyes uplifted to the Tabernacle, a horrible demon appeared in front of the gilded repository where his loved Redeemer was hidden. What demon this was we are not told, but it startled the boy, and with the natural impulse of a pure soul he made the sign of the Cross, first upon himself, and then on the marble step of the altar before which he knelt. To this day that sacred sign may there be seen, and in that hour his resolve was taken. He vowed himself to the service of God forever.

Fernando was only fifteen years of age when he turned from the wealth, rank, riches, and pleasures of the Court of Portugal to the poverty of the cloister. This he did with the full consent of his pious parents; unlike St. Aloysius, he was not

opposed in his sublime vocation. It may be a surprise to some who read this to hear that St. Anthony was not at first a Franciscan. We think of him always in the brown habit; but it was to the Monastery of St. Vincent, near Lisbon, a House of the Augustinians, that the boy presented himself. There he dwelt for two years, in peace and holiness, but at the end of that time he asked to be sent farther away from home. He had too many visitors, too many distractions. Though loath to part from him, his Superior knew that the boy was right; therefore he sent him to the Abbey of Santa Cruz at Coimbra, where he led a holy life, and applied himself so ardently to his studies as to become a marvel both of piety and learning. Duty was ever his first thought; at the time of study he never left it for prayer, but made of his work a constant oblation to God.

Eight years Fernando remained at Santa Cruz. Not far from the Monastery stood the Franciscan Abbey of the Olives. To the door of Fernando's retreat the barefooted friars often came, begging alms for their poor. Among them were five who were afterwards martyred in Morocco. When Fernando heard of this, he began to think he was wasting his life in solitude. He thought he could do more good for his fellow men by imitating the Franciscans; he, too, longed to be a martyr. Therefore, when the Brother whose duty it was to beg came again to Santa Cruz, Fernando had a long talk with him, and learned all about the rules of his Order. Soon afterwards this Brother died, and Fernando saw his soul ascending to Heaven in the form of a dove.

When Fernando told the Prior of his desire, the good monk did not oppose him, though very sorry to part with him; his

companions bade him Godspeed, believing, no doubt, that he had been called by Heaven to this new life.

“Go thy way,” said one of the old monks to him. “Thou wilt surely become a saint.”

Then Fernando put off the white robe and put on the brown garb of poverty, and this he did with the greatest joy he had ever known. With it he also renounced the name of Ferdinand, and was given that of Antonio, or Anthony.

They sent him to Morocco, where he wished to go as a missionary, hoping to become a martyr. But there he fell ill, and was obliged to return. On his way back to Portugal, he stopped in Italy, and there first met St. Francis, at Assisi. And as soon as he had seen St. Francis, he longed to live near him always. And yet it seems strange that no one appeared to want him, or take any notice of him.

Finally he was sent to Monte Paolo, a lonely spot in the Apennines. Quiet and humble as he was, he made no show of his talents, and the Master of Novices placed him in the kitchen. He was pale and weak from illness, and could not perform the service required of him. Here he remained for a year. At the end of that time he was selected to accompany his Superior to Forli. A preacher who was expected not having arrived, Anthony was ordered to speak. The hand of God was in this, as no one had ever heard him utter a word from the pulpit. Anthony begged to be excused, but his Superior would not listen to him. He obeyed; with the first sentence that came from his lips, all knew him for what he was, and at that moment the public life he wished to fly from began. As Anthony the great Preacher he was in future to be known. And he not only preached, but

practised what he preached. So great were the crowds that gathered to hear that he was obliged to have a body-guard of young men always near him. And soon he began to work miracles so numerous and so wonderful that the world has never seen greater. He healed the sick, raised the dead, predicted storms, and caused them to cease at his command. He was loving and merciful to all sinners.

“Once a sinner to Anthony came,
Filled was he with grief and shame.
He could not utter a single word;
St. Anthony’s tender heart was stirred.
He said, ‘Go write your sins, my son,
And I will read them, one by one.’
Soon again did the penitent stand
Beside the Saint, with scroll in hand.
The dear Saint took it, slowly read,
The sinner stood with bowed head.
The Saint said, ‘Look,’ and oh, delight!
The blackened scroll was snowy white.”

At one time St. Anthony was preaching in a church at Vicelli, when a great wail went up from the doorway. Everybody turned around, to behold a number of persons carrying a dead man on a bier. It was a sorrowing family whose son and brother had died; they had brought him with great faith to the Wonder Worker to be restored to life. When they laid the corpse before him, Anthony raised his eyes for a moment to Heaven; then stretching out his hand to the body he cried, "In the name of Jesus Christ, I say to you, young man, arise!" And the dead man at once arose, alive and well.

Again, on Easter Sunday, he was preaching in the Cathedral, when he suddenly remembered that he had been appointed to sing in the choir during High Mass at a certain convent chapel. He had forgotten all about it, but it seemed to him such a careless thing to do that he

covered his face with his cowl and remained silent for some time. Then he resumed his sermon, and it was afterwards learned that he had been present in the choir at the same time that he was preaching in the pulpit.

At Rimini, a body of unbelievers, called the Cathari, angry at the good works he was effecting, invited him to a feast, with the intention of poisoning him. They had placed poison in the food. Anthony went, but knew they had an evil purpose in view. "There is some trick here," he said frankly. "If it were not so, you would never have invited me to eat with you."

Then they answered him as follows:

"Do you believe in the Gospel you preach, or do you not?"

"I believe what I preach," replied the Saint.

"If you do, why do you not eat, then? Is it not written, 'In My name they shall

cast out devils, and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them'?"

Then Anthony blessed the food, and ate, and went his way, and all who saw the miracle were converted.

At Gemona, where he was building a convent, he found himself in need of bricks. Going out to the road, he saw a man coming through the dust with a wagon. The Saint said, "I want a load of bricks at once; will you be kind enough to bring them to me?"

The man, who did not care to go back again to the town, replied, "I cannot do it, for I am carrying a corpse." The truth was that his son was lying in the bottom of the wagon, asleep. Anthony said nothing, but stood looking after the wagon. When the man was out of sight of the Saint, he went to wake the boy to tell him of the trick he had played on the friar. But the boy was dead indeed.

Then the peasant hurried back to the Saint, begging him, with loud cries, to restore his son to life. Anthony made the sign of the Cross, the boy stood up, and father and son hurried back to the town for the bricks.

Tradition has given to several persons the honor of having sheltered St. Anthony on the night of his marvelous vision of the Infant Jesus. Some have said that he was lodging in the house of a poor tailor when it occurred; others that a nobleman was his host. But as to the main facts the story runs the same. After Anthony had retired to rest, the master of the house, passing his room, saw a very bright light, almost like a fire, from under the door. He stopped, and hearing voices, peeped through a crack in the door. There he saw Anthony kneeling before a table, upon which a large book lay open. On this book stood

a child, more beautiful than any one could imagine. The room was filled with a heavenly light, a delicious odor perfumed the air, and soft strains of music were echoed all around. The child leaned forward, caressing the Saint, who folded him to his breast. And the listener knew it was the Infant Jesus, for in a moment the vision faded away.

St. Anthony is called "of Padua" because he spent a great part of his life there, and did so much towards converting the people, who led very evil lives. He died at Arcello, in the Convent of the Poor Clares, but his body was taken to Padua, where such miracles were worked at his tomb that six months after his death they began the process of his canonization. Perhaps some who may read this sketch do not know the origin of what is called "St. Anthony's Bread" — that is, in its latest form, for St. An-

thony has always been known as the Patron of the poor. A pious woman, a small shopkeeper of Toulon, about seventy years ago placed a large lamp in his honor before a statue of the Saint, and people came there to pray, promising that if their requests were granted, they would give a certain quantity of bread to the poor, one, two, or three loaves, as they could afford it. So many prayers were answered that the devotion has spread all over the world, and though in many places and in many cases other alms are given instead of bread, the devotion is still known by that name.

St. Anthony has always been known as the guide of travelers, and this is why we put the initials "S. A. G." on our letters. They mean "St. Anthony Guide" and are used so universally that stamps are now made on which these three letters are inscribed. We are justified in this

custom from two incidents which took place during the life of the Saint. On one occasion he wished to obtain a permission of his Superior. He left the note containing his request on his desk, but when he returned it was gone, and he was unable to find it. He supposed, then, that God did not wish him to do as he had intended, and resolved to think no more about it. But the next time he went to his desk the *answer* to his own letter was lying there, in the handwriting of his Superior. No doubt some heavenly messenger had carried the epistles for him.

A Spanish lady whose husband had gone to Peru had written to him often without receiving any letter in reply. At length, having great confidence in St. Anthony, she wrote again, and taking the letter with her, placed it in the hands of the Saint's statue, in the Church of St. Francis, at Oviedo. The next day she came back,

full of faith, but seeing a letter still there, thought it was the one she had written, and began to cry. The sacristan saw her and told her he had been wondering why he could not move the piece of paper from the hand of the statue, as he had tried to do. "See if St. Anthony will give it to you," he said. The lady at once took it in her hand, and three hundred golden crowns rolled upon the floor. It was not her own, but one which her husband had written her.

He wrote that he had been very anxious about her, not having heard from her, and that a Franciscan friar whom he did not know had just brought him a letter from her, and was waiting for an answer, which he would give him with money enclosed. His own name was Antonio, he had, like his wife, great love for his Patron Saint, and that Saint, in return, worked a miracle for him. In

no other way could two letters have passed between Spain and Peru in twenty-four hours. St. Anthony had carried them himself. This very letter is still to be seen at Oviedo.

There is no need to tell the readers of this recital that St. Anthony is always invoked to find things that are lost. They all know it. And they are equally aware that he finds and restores objects to their owners in very mysterious ways. The following story, strictly true, will be quite new to all who read it.

Two little girls, aged five and seven, were sent to the grocery for the first time in their lives. They were very innocent children, and when a dirty, barefooted girl, with a basket on her arm, said to the youngest child, "Let me see if that ring you have on will fit me," the little one at once gave it to her. It was a very pretty ring, with a red stone, and

the child prized it dearly. As soon as the beggar girl got hold of the ring she ran away, and the two children hurried home in tears, and told their sad story. That night, a priest who was visiting at their home told them how St. Anthony was always asked to find things that were lost and stolen, and advised them to make a Novena. All the family joined in this, and the child to whom the ring belonged did not doubt for a single moment that St. Anthony would return it to her. On the day the Novena was finished the little girls, with their brother, who was older, and their nurse, were out walking. The child whose ring had been taken suddenly cried out, "There goes the girl who stole my ring." And there she was, riding on the back of a dray, ragged, unkempt, and barefoot, her basket still on her arm. As soon as she saw them, she jumped from the dray

and tried to run away, but the boy ran after her, caught up with her, and took the ring from her finger. Little Mary was deeply grateful to St. Anthony, always prayed to him in every need, and when at Confirmation the Bishop took the paper from her fingers, the name he saw written there was "Antonio," whom she has, after our Blessed Mother, always held as her Patron.

A still more wonderful thing occurred a few years ago at a seaside resort. A lady, bathing in the surf, lost a diamond ring which was a little too large for her finger. She did not miss it until she had been out of the water some time, and therefore could not say whether she had dropped it before going in or after. She was very much distressed, as her mother, who was dead, had given her this ring, and had also taught her to feel a great confidence in St. Anthony. She searched

for the greater part of the day in the sand, but the ring was not to be found. As she was obliged to leave the place the next morning, she could do nothing but leave her address, and promise a reward if the ring should be recovered. Then she went to her far-away Eastern home. Three years later she was again at the same watering-place, a small village, where lived a great many fishermen, who went out every morning in their boats, returning about noon with their haul of fish, which were bought by the cottagers and boarding-house keepers. One morning the lady who had lost the ring was seated on the sand watching the boats and telling the story of the affair to a friend who sat near her.

“And did you pray to St. Anthony?” inquired her friend.

“Indeed I did,” was the reply. “But he did nothing for me.”

"And do you still pray and ask him to find it?" continued the other.

"Oh, no. I have given it up long ago. I shall never see it again," she replied.

"If I were in your place," said her friend, "I would begin again, this very day, this very moment."

"I will," rejoined the other, laughing, and bowing her head she invoked the Saint who restores things that are lost. A moment later she began to dig up the sand with the point of her parasol; it went in deeper and deeper, when suddenly she saw something glisten, and, stooping down, picked up her ring. It had been firmly embedded between two stones, or the tide would have washed it away. She had been sitting in that very spot two years before when she lost it, and it had dropped there from her finger.

But if we were to repeat all the won-

derful things St. Anthony has done for his clients, we should never be finished. The more one knows of him, the more one wishes to know. The better one loves him, the better one desires to love this great Saint whom the Liturgy calls "a violet of humility, a lily of chastity, a rose of divine charity," and whose name, centuries after his death, is honored and revered with a devotion beyond compare.



ST. BERNARD

PATRON SAINTS

ST. BERNARD

MORE than eight hundred years ago, there lived in Burgundy, which is a part of France, a noble knight and his lady, and their seven children, six sons and one daughter. This knight was called Tecelin, Lord of Fontaines, and his wife was Elizabeth, daughter of the Count of Monthor. Their children were Guy, Gerard, Bernard, André, Bartholemi, Nivard, and Hombeline, the little sister of these six stalwart boys.

Now Tecelin, as was the custom of the time, lived much at the court and in the camp of the Duke of Burgundy, his liege lord; and thus it happened that the children were left almost entirely to the care

of their mother. As she was a woman of great piety, she trained them so well that her influence was seen through their whole lives. As his sons grew up, Tecelin desired them to be soldiers like himself, and we shall see how far this wish was carried out by his children.

Bernard was born in 1091. His mother dedicated him, as she had his two elder brothers, to God, and her hopes and desires for him were especially fervent, as she had had a vision concerning him which made her believe he was to be a true servant and follower of God. He resembled his father in person, being tall, slender and fair, with beautiful blue eyes and light, golden hair; but his soul was like that of his mother. Those who met him first were always attracted by his beauty; afterward they loved him for his goodness.

It was, no doubt, because of his youthful

piety that his mother succeeded in having him sent to Chatillon, a college on the River Seine, to pursue a complete course of studies with the priests who lived there, while his elder brothers were learning military exercises and feats of arms. Even then he loved to be alone, and to pass his leisure time in prayer, though he was kind and amiable to every one. The enemies of the Church tell us that it forbids us to read the Holy Scriptures, a reproach which is false, and has always been. A great number of the saints have made them their especial study, and St. Bernard is one of these. He studied and meditated upon them continually, and it was on that account his style as a preacher became so lofty and beautiful. It is true that in those days the Bible was not in every house as it may be now, if people have enough regard for it to procure and read it, but that was because printing had not

yet been invented, and books, every word of which had to be written by hand, were very few. Our enemies have declared over and over again that the monks had the Bible chained to the walls, so that the common people might not be able to gain access to them; but this is far from the truth. It was because copies of the Holy Scriptures were so rare that they feared impious hands might carry them off. They were often read to the people, and their meaning explained by men who had spent their lives in prayer and study, instead of being placed in the hands of ignorant persons and untaught children, to take whatever meaning from those sublime pages they might choose to give them.

When St. Bernard was nineteen years old, his mother died. After this he returned to his home at Fontaines, and was now his own master, as his father was

constantly absent from his home. He made his appearance in the world of society with all the grace and dignity befitting his rank. Young friends of his own age surrounded him, and a life of luxury and pleasure stretched out before him. But little by little he began to see that many of his friends were false, and most of them men of wicked lives. His soul was disturbed. God was speaking to his young and innocent heart.

One day, as he was riding to the camp to see his brothers, he passed a church and seemed to hear a voice which said: "Come to Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden and I will refresh you; take My yoke upon you and you shall find rest to your souls." He at once dismounted, went into the church, and fell on his knees. From that moment he had not a doubt of his vocation.

And now comes the most wonderful part

of the story of Bernard and his five brothers. He had resolved to become a Cistercian monk, but his uncle and the rest of his family did all in their power to persuade him to change his mind. Nothing could alter it, however, and in a little while his brothers Bartholemi and André suddenly declared that they would go with Bernard. Then came Guy, the eldest, who was married and had two daughters; but his wife, willing that he should go, also became a nun. Gerard, the second brother, a valiant soldier, at first opposed them, but, being severely wounded by a lance and then taken prisoner, began to reflect upon eternity. As soon as he was released he went to join the others, accompanied by his best friend, Hugh of Macon. When the time came to take leave of their father, they went to Fontaines, to beg his blessing. With a virtue beautiful and rare even in those days of faith, Count

Tecelin gave it to them with streaming eyes. He had left only his youngest son, Nivard, and his lovely daughter, Hombeline. As the brothers left the castle they met little Nivard at play with some other children of his own age.

“Adieu, little brother,” called out Guy, the eldest. “You will have all our lands and estates to yourself.”

“What!” exclaimed the boy. “You are all taking heaven, and leaving me only the earth? That is not fair!” The step his brothers had taken made such an impression on the boy that very soon after he followed them, leaving his father to be cared for by their sister Hombeline, who was the youngest of the family. Several years later Tecelin joined the community. Hombeline married and led a very worldly life, but her turn came also. After the death of her husband she began to reflect upon her sins, and realized that her

brothers had chosen the better part. Having made up her mind to go to the monastery of Clairvaux, where they lived, to pay them a visit, she set out for that place. At first, not knowing of her change of heart, for they had heard of her worldly life, and supposing that she came only for curiosity, they refused to see her. But she began to weep, and said to the messenger: "I know I am a sinner, but did not Christ die for such as I am? If my brothers despise my body, let not the servants of God despise my soul. I will do whatever Bernard desires." A very wise and sensible remark, and one which brought St. Bernard at once to her side. Seeing the beauty of the life led by the monks of Clairvaux, she entered a convent of women, and became a nun.

At Citeaux, where they first went, a monastery founded by St. Stephen, life was very hard. Prayer, work, and medita-

tion, fasting and penance, heat in summer and cold in winter was their portion. The fame of the holiness of these men caused many to join them, and the monastery soon became too small to hold them.

Several colonies went forth to found new houses, St. Bernard and his brothers among them. They chose some land in a marshy, desert, and lonely spot called Absinthea, formerly the haunt of robbers, but Bernard renamed it, "Clair-Valle," "bright valley," and it has since been known as Clairvaux.

Being very austere himself, Bernard was at first severe with the monks whom he governed; so much so that they lost courage and were quite unhappy. But his eyes were suddenly opened to the fault he had committed, and ever after he was as kind as a gentle father. So great was his virtue that only two other faults are

recorded of him. Once, when he was still a novice, he made the resolution to say the Seven Penitential Psalms daily for the soul of his mother. One day he omitted them, and St. Stephen inquired of him, "Bernard, whom did you ask yesterday to say the Psalms for you?" Full of confusion, the young novice fell at the feet of his superior, and confessed his fault. On another occasion, he was sent to speak to some secular friends, and asked them some worldly questions, which was not according to the monastic spirit. Bernard never ceased to bewail this fault.

Although Bernard had received a fine education, he drew all the beautiful thoughts with which his discourses are filled, as we have said before, from one book, the Scriptures, and secondly from Nature, which he ardently loved. He was fond of roaming through the woods, observing the foliage on the trees, and

the birds in their little nests among them; the sound of fresh, flowing water was music in his ears, the sight of the running brook and foaming river one of his greatest delights, the stars, those lamps of heaven, reminded him of the power and majesty of God.

“Believe me, on my own experience,” said he once to a monk who had joined the Order, “you will find more in the woods than in books; the forests and rocks will teach you what you cannot learn of the greatest masters.” And yet there were times when he was so rapt in the thought of God that he did not take note of anything before him. One day when walking along the border of the Lake of Lausanne, going from one monastery to another, he was so occupied with holy thoughts that, in the evening, when he had reached his destination and was asked if he had noted the beauty of the

lake, he answered that he had not known there was any water there.

St. Bernard was more than once called upon by the Pope to settle disputes which had arisen among the bishops, and always performed his mission with success, after which he would again return to his monastery and take up his labors of tilling the ground with the humblest of his brethren.

In 1147 Pope Eugenius ordered Bernard to preach the Second Crusade, in all the principal provinces of France. He did the same in Germany, where his name has ever since been held in the greatest honor. Although a large number of persons engaged in this Crusade, the armies were defeated, and many of the soldiers cherished very hard feelings against Bernard, who had, by his preaching, fired their souls to fight in defense of the cross. But he had only done what he was commanded to do, and though his heart was torn by the

sufferings of the Crusaders, and the reproaches heaped upon him during what he calls "his season of disgrace," he accepted all from the hand of God as a lesson in the humility which was his Gospel and his rule of life.

His zeal was also employed in the conversion of notorious sinners and heretics, Wherever he went he performed miracles which brought many back to the fold of Christ. Once, at Sarlat, a town in Rerigord, while blessing some loaves of bread which were brought to him, he said:

"By this shall you know the truth of our doctrine and the falsehood of that which is taught by the heretics, if such as are sick among you recover their health by tasting these loaves." One who stood near the Saint, being fearful that it might not happen as Bernard had said, replied:

"That is, if they taste with faith, they shall be cured."

But the holy Abbot answered: "I said not so, and I mean not so — but that *all* who taste shall be cured, that they may know we are sent by God." And so it happened that every one who tasted, Catholic or heretic, believing or unbelieving, was cured.

St. Bernard was constantly preaching humility as the foundation of all virtue. "Hence we must pray with St. Augustine," said he: "'Lord, teach me to know Thee, and to know myself.' Thee to love and glorify alone in all things; myself never secretly to confide in, or ascribe any good to."

One of the happiest events of St. Bernard's life was the visit of the great St. Malachi, Chief Bishop of Ireland. Each of these holy men had heard of the other, and longed to meet. On his way to Rome St. Malachi stopped at Clairvaux. He paid a second visit there, toward the

end of his life, and counted it a great blessing that God permitted him to die in the arms of St. Bernard.

Our Saint was fond of conversing with the poor and lowly of God's servants, often saying that wisdom and penetration were granted them far above that given to the learned.

On one occasion, when he was traveling with two novices, he stopped as night drew on at the hut of a poor wood-cutter who lived alone in the forest. The door stood open, the wood-cutter was on his knees praying.

"May we have shelter for the night, my good man?" inquired the Saint. "We have traveled far, we are thirsty, our wallets are empty, and our feet are sore. Give us, we beseech you, of your store, and God will reward you, a hundred-fold."

"In God's name, enter and share with

me," replied the wood-cutter. "You are truly welcome."

The trio crossed the threshold of the hospitable man. A good fire was blazing in the hearth. While their host prepared the meal, the Saint sat at some distance from the fire, reading his breviary. One of the monks stationed himself very close to the blaze. The other walked restlessly up and down.

"Good Father," said the old man, addressing himself to St. Bernard, "you be one in authority?"

"How do you know it?"

"By the upright manner in which you sit, by the ease with which you handle your book."

"You read human nature well," rejoined the monk who sat near the fire. "That is the Abbot of Clairvaux."

"And what think you of my companions?" inquired the Saint.

“He who sits at the hearth loveth too well his bodily comfort ever to live long in a cloister,” was the answer. “To the fire he stretches out the soles of his feet, ever and anon he glances at the pot, and sniffs the porridge. He is no model monk, my Lord Abbot!”

“And what of me?” inquired the third, when the laugh had subsided.

“Thou art like a caged animal, with thy uneasy step and nervous hands. Thou art not for the calling of a friar.”

The monk frowned.

The result proved how well he read character. Not long after the lover of his ease was dismissed from the Order for sloth and gluttony; while the ambition and jealousy of the second resulted in his leaving the monastery.

Several years after, when St. Bernard passed that way again, he sought out the old wood-cutter, whom he found lying ill

and alone. He had him carried to the monastery, where he admitted him as a lay-brother, made him porter, and held him in high esteem until his death.

As an example of the effect of St. Bernard's preaching in regard to the virtue of humility, we have the story of Girard, Earl of Mons, who had led a very good life, but once, having fallen into a great sin while at war in Brabant, he remembered the advice of St. Bernard and resolved to do humble penance for his fault. He disguised himself, and going on foot to the Abbey of Morimond, one of St. Bernard's monasteries, hired himself out to the lay-brothers there as a keeper of swine. One day, a servant of two officers who had been under his command, riding near to the Abbey, knew him by his voice and features. The man rode back to his masters and said:

“Yonder, tending swine, is our lost Lord.”

The officers hastily followed the servant, and, seeing that he spoke the truth, got down from their horses and tried to embrace the Earl, despite his lowly appearance.

“Nay, nay,” said the swineherd, “ye do mistake, I am but a humble keeper of the hogs.”

But they knew him for their Lord and went to the Abbot, who came down quickly to the farm; the penitent, whom St. Bernard’s preaching had filled with the spirit of humility, confessed with floods of tears. The Abbot persuaded him to take the religious habit, after which he lived a holy life and died a holy death, faithful to the end.

St. Bernard was a loving client of the Blessed Virgin. His works are full of her praises. He excels all spiritual writers by the sweetness with which he treats of the blessed Mother of God. The *Memorare*,

that beautiful prayer beginning, "Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary," is commonly called *St. Bernard's Prayer*. That prayer may well be called miraculous, so many hardened souls has it moved and converted. The *Salve Regina*, that hymn of so great beauty that the mere recital of it moves the eyes to tears, owes its closing lines to the great Saint. On one of his missions into Germany, being in the grand church at Spire, he repeated thrice, as one in a rapture, "O clement! O loving! O sweet Virgin Mary!" From this devout exclamation of St. Bernard the custom was formed of singing the famous anthem every day in the Cathedral of Spire. It is still done in the Cistercian Order, though eight hundred years have passed since it was first sung within the walls of the church where the Virgin Mother of God was so highly honored.

If we were to relate the history of the

conversions made by St. Bernard, among princes who, amid their honors and riches, had despised God and His laws, or among prelates who, forgetting the precepts of their Master, had amassed wealth and lived in luxury, we should never end. St. Bernard believed and taught that no bishop, priest, or monk should own anything more than was sufficient to keep his church in decency and God's altar in reverence, besides what was necessary for simple food, drink, and clothing. All above this he said should be used for the poor. In all this he set a fine example, giving so much of his revenues to the naked and hungry that often, in times of famine, he left his monks without provisions. And yet those revenues were very large. At Clairvaux might be found mills of all kinds; cloth was woven, wool was spun, and timber felled and sawed. At the same time it was a seat of learning,

to which bishops, cardinals, and even Popes often went, urged thither by the renown of the piety of its inmates.

It was on the 20th of August, 1153, at this beloved retreat, to which he always went after his various missions, that God rewarded his servant Bernard, after a long life of labor and privation, by calling him to his eternal home. We need not attempt to describe the sorrow that filled the whole of Christendom when the world learned that his soul had taken flight. He was a man who had not a single enemy, but who was everywhere beloved; a man who had more influence on his times than any king, who, having embraced poverty, had been granted wealth, which he again distributed to the needy; who had given himself entirely to God, and in God found his riches and reward.

But the glory of Clairvaux has long since departed. Its vast buildings have

been turned into a prison, the convicts plying their trades in the halls where once St. Bernard and his monks chanted the praises of God. The prison yard has taken the place of the Abbey church which was St. Bernard's pride and glory, and only the fragrant memory of the holy past is left on the spot where once towered the beloved Clairvaux of the Great St. Bernard.



ST. MARTIN OF TOURS

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LIKE St. Elizabeth, St. Martin was a Hungarian. He was born about the year 316. While he was still a child, his parents left their native land, and went to live at Pavia, in Italy, where the famous university was situated. We are not told why they did this, as it was not customary in those days for people to change their place of abode from one country to another, as they do now; but very likely we shall not be far wrong in thinking that it was in order to give their son the best education they could obtain for him.

The father of St. Martin was an officer in the army, both of his parents were pagans, but from his infancy Martin was fond of the society of Christians. Per-

haps, among the servants in his father's house there may have been some, or he may have had a Christian playmate with whom he wandered into the house of God. The child was very clever; he observed everything that went on around him, and very soon came to see how different the Christians were in conduct from the idolaters. He had already begun to go to school; there were many boys of his age with whom he passed several hours every day; he saw that while the pagans used profane and unclean language, quarreling among themselves, and spending much time on the streets, the others were studious, quiet, pure in their conversation, and fond of passing their leisure hours in their own homes. He began to enquire why it was, and soon learned that their religion commanded them to be models of virtue.

Martin was born with a soul that

thirsted for virtue, and so felt himself drawn into the society of these Christians, upon whom so many looked with scorn and contempt, and who had been accused of the foulest crimes.

When he reached the age of ten he began to go regularly to church, to listen to sermons and the Catechism, and after a while asked permission to take his seat among the catechumens, or those preparing for Baptism. No doubt, his parents thought he went from curiosity, and did not imagine he could have any intention of becoming a Christian. When Martin, having asked to be baptized, was told that he must first obtain the permission of his father and mother, he lost no time in making his request. To his surprise and regret they would not hear of such a thing, though they did not forbid him to continue his visits to the church and school. No doubt, they thought it wiser

to let his childish fancy wear away of itself. Martin returned to his place in the class, listened eagerly to all that was said, put questions to the instructors and answered others, like the rest of his young companions, longing in his boyish heart for the touch of the saving water that flowed upon the foreheads of those who were not deprived, like himself, of the grace of Baptism.

Thus for five years he remained steadfast in his desire to become a Christian, which shows how persevering was his disposition. He did not fight or bluster because he was not permitted to follow the desire of his heart, but simply awaited the great day which he knew must come to him sometime should he continue faithful to the call of God, ever present in his boyish soul, ever telling him to despise the world and its vanity.

At that time young men entered the

army at a very early age; and Martin, whom his family had destined to be a soldier, like his father, was summoned to take part in the defense of his country when he had barely reached fifteen. At the command of the Emperor, as the son of an officer, he was obliged to devote himself to a profession which he did not like, although he was no coward. However, he obeyed with a very good grace, soon grew proficient in feats of arms, was faithful to all his duties, and became a bright example to every one around him. Equal to his fellow-soldiers in all that made their lives brave and noble, he did not imitate them in either their follies or vices. At first they tried to make him do as they did, but very soon, seeing they could not move him, they began to admire a life which they could not imitate, because they had not the grace which Martin had earned by his virtue and piety.

Martin had a very kind heart; he was never more happy than when waiting on the sick or assisting the poor. When, after a skirmish or battle, his wounded comrades were brought into camp, he devoted himself to their care, and spent nearly all his pay in supplying them with delicacies which they could not otherwise have received.

St. Sulpician, who wrote the Life of St. Martin, relates the following anecdote of his unselfish charity. One seldom sees a picture of the Saint that does not illustrate the occurrence, which has been made the subject of verse and story, and comes down to us through the ages fresh and pure as when it happened, and was first told in the quaint language of the long ago.

The winter had been long, the day was cold, and Martin, with the rest of his comrades rode, at the close of day, through

the broad gates of the city of Amiens. Suddenly, as they went, there stood in the path before them a very old man, bent and weary. Almost naked, trembling with cold and hunger, his rags shaking in the wind, his long beard waving hither and thither, he was, indeed, a sorry sight. Martin, almost at the end of the column, had a good view of him, and his kind heart was touched and deeply grieved, for, to his great surprise, none of those in front gave alms to the beggar nor even a kind word, nor took the slightest notice of him.

"Ah, why is this," he said to himself, "that not a soul has given him a single penny? And alas!" he thought, "from me he will not get a coin either, for my pockets are empty." He had already spent all his pay in charity. The clothes he had on his back were all he owned in the world. It seemed to him that the poor old man looked at him im-

ploringly, and his eyes filled with tears. He could not pass the shivering beggar, without trying in some way to help his misery. Then a thought came to him, and his heart grew lighter. Pulling his warm cloak from his shoulders with one hand, he drew his sword with the other, and, cutting the garment in two, he tossed half of it from his sword-point, to the beggar. Without a word, but bowing gratefully to the kind soldier, the old man wrapped the cloth about him and disappeared in the crowd. Probably he had never in his life been so well clad before. The young officer drew the remaining half of the garment around his shoulders and passed through the gate of the city amid the jeers of those among his comrades who thought him a fool for his charity, and the silence of others, more humane, who felt themselves rebuked for their own selfishness.

The next night, or very soon after, Martin had a dream. He thought Our Lord came and stood before him, wearing on His shoulders that half of the cloak which had been given to the beggar. Christ seemed to smile upon the young trooper, and as he gazed Our Saviour said:

“Martin, look well at the garment I wear, and see whether you know it.”

Then Christ turned to the angels beside Him and spoke to them as follows:

“Martin, yet a catechumen, has clothed Me with this garment.”

With these words the vision faded, and the soldier awoke. But the dream held him fast; he could not forget it. It made him reflect, and to his conscious soul it meant several things. First, that though a catechumen, still unbaptized, he had given the half of his cloak to a beggar, leaving himself but partially clad, and an object of jest to his comrades, he could

and should do a great deal more if he were a Christian. Secondly, that if as a catechumen he had the courage and charity to perform this act, after the grace of Baptism he would be able to do much more. The vision decided him; he felt that he ought not to have gone so far without going farther, and that he must no longer delay. He made up his mind to be baptized as soon as possible, and not only that, but to offer his whole life to the service of God. In order to do this he would have to leave the army, and he felt he would be accused either of cowardice or as one lacking in love for his country.

But he did not falter. As soon as he had been baptized, he went to his commanding officer and told him he intended to lay down his arms, asking at the same time for his dismissal. Although Martin did not know it, the troops were on the eve of a battle with the Germans, with

whom they were at war. It turned out as he had feared.

"You are a coward!" cried his general, "to ask for dismissal at this time, when a fight may take place at any moment."

"I did not know it," replied the youth, "and I am no coward. Put me in the front rank, among my fellow-soldiers, and I will show you that I am not a craven. In the name of the Lord Jesus, who is my God, and whom I adore, without shield or helmet, unprotected, but by the sign of the cross, I will thrust myself into the thick of the enemy without fear."

That very night, instead of a battle, the Germans demanded peace. It was granted, and Martin left the army forever. Soon after he went to Poitiers, and placed himself at the disposal of St. Hilary, then Bishop of that city. The good Bishop soon saw that the valiant youth was made of priceless stuff, and felt confident that God

had chosen him to do great deeds for His Church. After he had been some time at Poitiers, studying for the priesthood, and preparing himself, according to the Bishop's wish, for his future labors, he felt a strong desire to visit his parents, and received permission to do so. While crossing the Alps he fell in with a band of robbers who meant to kill him. He did not seem at all afraid of them, and the leader said:

“Brave youth, who art thou? Dost thou not fear this sword which I hold above thy head to destroy thee?”

“Nay,” replied Martin, “I do not fear thee; I am a Christian. Never have I felt more calm and secure than at this moment.”

“And why does thy title of Christian make thee more secure?”

“Because I know my God is always near me in life and in death. Because He will help me in every danger. If He

wills that I am to die now, by your hand, so shall it be. If He wills that I live longer to serve Him and praise Him, I shall live. I have no fear. All that troubles me is this, that by being a murderer thou wilt risk damnation; all that grieves me is this, that by the lives you lead you deprive yourselves of the friendship of Christ, my Lord and God."

"Thy courage and confidence in the God whom thou dost worship, I admire," said the chief of the robbers. "Go thy way in peace."

The words of Martin had fallen on good soil. The weeds of evil had not entirely choked the flowers of virtue in the heart of the robber. He became a Christian, entered a monastery for penitents, and himself related this story.

On this visit to his parents St. Martin converted his mother, but his father always remained a pagan. When he returned to

Poitiers he wished to become a hermit. The Bishop did not think he could do as much good in that way as by preaching and teaching, but St. Martin, who thought himself of no account as a guide to others, still persisted, and St. Hilary at last gave him some land about two leagues from the city, and permitted him to go. With some other pious men he took up his abode there. The fame of his great holiness had already gone abroad; people came to ask his advice in their sorrows and trials, the sick to be healed; and at this time, St. Martin twice restored the dead to life.

Upon the death of the Bishop of Tours he was appointed in his place, much against his will, as his humility made him believe that he was not worthy of so much honor. But God, who had directed him from childhood, gave him grace to bear the burden. His life of solitude had also

been a preparation. He had much to contend with, from both his own people and the heretics who were beginning to make themselves felt on all sides. But the gentleness of his character was like oil poured on the raging waters of discontent and treason. No one ever saw him angry; his words were always mild, though he never wavered from the stand he had taken after reflection and prayer. Although bred in camps, and so understanding how to deal with coarse, rough men, he had none of the rudeness of the soldier.

He was not a very learned man, as he had early left his studies to enter the army, but he was so skilful in argument, and so well read in the history of the Church and its doctrines, that he could silence and confute heresy as well as the best theologians. There is no doubt that the example of his daily life had much to

do with this; when people saw that he lived as he preached, it caused them to reflect on the religion that made such holiness possible. Like many other saints he seemed able to recognize hypocrisy in others; it was through the light of virtue, which, shining in his soul, was quick to discover the powers of darkness.

The evil spirit made many attempts to drag the holy Bishop from the heights of sanctity, both by temptation and persecution. It is related that one day while St. Martin, when he was a hermit, was praying in his cell, the devil, tired of attacking him, resolved to gain him by deceit. St. Martin, whose head was buried in his hands, suddenly felt that the place had become filled with light, and, lifting his eyes, beheld a man of smiling and beautiful countenance, clad in rich garments, with a crown of gold and precious stones upon his brow. In the words of the poet:

“St. Martin gazed. ‘Who art thou?’ then he said,

‘That comest with a crown upon thy head,
Glittering and golden, in rich crimson decked,
Thy garments with bright jewels all beflecked?
Who art thou?’ And the radiant vision smiled,
Answering him in accents sweet and mild,
‘I am the Christ, thy Lord!’ but Martin shook
his head,

“‘The Christ, my Lord, no jewels wears,’ he said,
‘Nor crowned with diadem doth He appear,
Nor crimson-clad. Who art thou?’ ‘Do not fear,’
Replied the spirit. ‘Jesus is my name.’
‘Nay, nay!’ cried Martin. ‘Satan, to thy flame
Depart, for never shall this heart believe
Thou art my Lord! Ah, thou canst not deceive,
For Christ comes only with His wounds laid bare,
Marks of the scourge upon His body fair,
And stains of blood. Satan, begone, I say!’
And then the evil one did fade away,
And a vile odor filled the holy place
Where he had stood. St. Martin hid his face.”

St. Martin saw a lesson in every object
in Nature. He was fond of pointing out

these things to his companions. One day, while traveling with some of his friends and disciples, they saw a sheep which had been newly shorn. Turning to his followers, he said: "This sheep has indeed fulfilled the precepts of the Gospel. Having two coats, it has parted with one, in order to give it to such as have none and have need of covering; so should we likewise do."

"But, Lord," questioned a young neophyte among them, "what two coats? Dost thou not see that having parted with his fleecy coat the sheep has only its skin?"

"That is the other coat," said the Bishop.

"Dost mean, then, O Lord," asked the disciple, "that one must give one's last garment to the poor?"

"Yes, for in some manner another will be provided," answered the man who had

cut his cloak in two to bestow it on a beggar.

Again, while making pastoral visits through his diocese, St. Martin came to a river, in which there were so many fish that the birds of the air had pounced down upon them and were gorging themselves with the poor little creatures. The Bishop watched them for some time in silence.

“What do these birds resemble?” he asked at length.

No one could answer him.

“They are like our infernal enemies,” he said, “always lying in wait to catch souls, and then, when they have made them their prey, devouring them.” With these words, he stretched forth his hands, saying:

“Evil and gluttonous birds, I command ye to leave these poor helpless creatures in the river beneath ye; go, fly away to your own haunts, and molest them no longer.”

The birds at once flew away and returned no more.

Wherever St. Martin journeyed he made many converts among the pagans. He always caused their temples to be destroyed, often building churches on the spot where the false gods had been adored. It is a curious fact that nearly always those among them who were yet unconverted, and who did not, as was natural, like to see their heathen temples razed to the ground, ended by becoming Christians. It was the piety, the simplicity, gentleness, and kindness of the good Bishop that caused the change. People could not refrain from listening to his words; his sermons were so clear and his arguments so good that they could not help believing what he taught. These pagans often worshiped trees; they held that they were the dwelling-places of certain gods,

and that if the trees were destroyed the gods would also die. It was thought a great sacrilege to cut down one of these trees. But St. Martin knew that in order to uproot paganism in the hearts of the people it was also necessary to do away with all that might remind them of it. On one occasion, when he had ordered a temple to be pulled down, he commanded that a pine tree which grew near it should be felled to the earth. The chief priest of the idolaters did all he could to prevent this, but the Bishop was firm. He did not wish a church of the true God to stand side by side with a memento of paganism. At length the heathens, having consulted together and wishing to know whether the God whom Martin preached would come to his assistance, proposed as follows, through the mouth of their priest:

“Sir,” they said, “we promise to have the tree cut down, we agree to fell it

with our own hands, upon one condition."

"What is that condition?" asked St. Martin.

"That you, who trust so entirely in your God, will agree to stand under the tree, in the exact spot we shall point out to you."

"I do agree," rejoined the Bishop, without hesitating one moment.

"So be it," said the priests, and they bound him with cords, so that he could not move an inch. They thought that when the tree was ready to fall it would descend upon him and crush him. The pagans gathered around him in silence, listening to the thud of the ax as the men began to cleave the trunk of the giant pine. Calm and fearless stood the Bishop, with folded hands, praying most fervently. When the moment came that warned him the tree was about to fall, he

made a great sign of the cross, which was seen by all the multitude, and then the tree groaned, tottered, and fell — in the opposite direction — a miracle indeed, and witnessed by thousands. Many conversions followed this occurrence.

St. Martin lived to be more than eighty years of age. He never seemed to grow old, nor to require rest. He fasted and prayed like a young man in the first fervor of devotion. He traveled about from place to place, baptizing and instructing wherever he went. But at last his strength suddenly failed and he fell ill. He was ready to go, his work was done. He died as he had lived, a saint of God.

They buried him on a spot which was then outside the city walls, but which was afterward inclosed. Above his tomb a magnificent chancel was erected; beside it rose a monastery famous through all Europe. On account of the incident of

the cloak, St. Martin has often been named the Patron Saint of beggars. His feast is kept on the 11th of November, in that beautiful season of the year between autumn and winter, called sometimes "St. Catharine's" and sometimes "St. Martin's Summer."



ST. MICHAEL

ST. MICHAEL

IT has always been a belief of the Church that the angels have power to hear and help us. Before the fall of Lucifer, who was the greatest angel in heaven, these children of light dwelt bright and unsullied in the Courts of the Most High. The title Lucifer, "light-bearer," is the only name which has come down to us by tradition of the hosts who shared in his fall, and followed him into fire everlasting.

The name of Michael signifies, in Hebrew, "*Who is like God!*" This was, as it were, the motto of St. Michael the Archangel, when, on the revolt of Lucifer, he placed himself at the head of the good angels, of

whom three are spoken of in particular, St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and St. Raphael. Lucifer was proud, St. Michael humble, willing to give Almighty God the honor which was due Him.

Devotion to St. Michael, who is called the Prince of the Angels, can be traced as far back as the earliest history of mankind. When Adam and Eve were driven out of their earthly paradise for having disobeyed the command of God in eating the forbidden fruit, we read that an angel with a flaming sword was placed at the entrance of the Garden of Eden to prevent them from entering there again. Tradition says that this angel was St. Michael, the Prince of all the angelic choirs, who is always represented as clothed in armor, with a sword in his hand.

When Moses died, it was ordered that he should be secretly buried. We read in Scripture that "no man knoweth the place

of his sepulture" — the reason of this being that the Jews, so long held in bondage by the Egyptians, had not failed to imbibe some of their idolatrous customs, one of which was to pay such honors to their great men after death as to make gods of them, worshiping their corrupted bodies and adoring them in their tombs. It was feared that the Jews might follow this practice in the case of Moses, who had taken them from slavery into freedom, and when the devil tempted them not to follow out the order of God, to bury Moses secretly, St. Michael, always to the front in defending virtue and truth and preventing error, commanded Satan, in the name of God, to desist. It was to St. Michael also that the Jews were grateful for being admitted at last to the Promised Land, believing that he was the angel who led them there.

There have been many apparitions of

St. Michael to various saints, and in various countries. In the fifth century he appeared to the Bishop of Siponto in the kingdom of Naples, and ordered him to build a church, which is still in existence and is a place of great devotion.

In 708, Aubert, Bishop of Avranches, in France, moved, it is said, by certain visions, built a church in honor of St. Michael on a barren rock which overhangs the sea, between Normandy and Brittany, which later became an abbey.

There was a similar church built to St. Michael in Cornwall, England, on a rock, which, when the tide was full, became an island, as the sea, at such times, surrounded it entirely.

At the time of a great plague in the city of Rome, an angel sheathing his sword appeared on the tower of the Castle of St. Angelo. Those who beheld the vision understood by this that the plague would

abate, and so it proved. This apparition must surely have been St. Michael, and as such do the Romans remember it to this day.

There is no picture more familiar to us than that of St. Michael with a sword in his hand, one foot on the body of the fallen angel, Lucifer. It is related that during the Middle Ages the people of a certain part of Normandy so cherished the devotion to St. Michael that some pious soul, more zealous than sane, ordered a red velvet-covered shield to be hung up in the church, saying that it was the same the Archangel had used in his conflict with Lucifer when the prince of devils was cast out of heaven. Crowds of people flocked to behold this trophy, but when the Bishop heard of it, he at once ordered it to be taken down, publicly rebuked the priest who had permitted it to be hung up, and explained to the people that their piety was in danger

of becoming superstition, in believing that the Archangel Michael, a pure spirit, without a body, could ever have worn an actual shield.

Nowhere was St. Michael more revered and honored during the Ages of Faith than in England. St. Michael's day, the 29th of September, called the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, was one of the greatest festivals of the Church in England, and is still celebrated there to a certain extent, though it has lost much of its pious meaning. It is one of the four quarter-days, as they are called, when rents are paid; and as Americans always celebrate Christmas with a turkey, so do the English people, among the farming class, Protestant and Catholic, always have goose for dinner on St. Michael's Day. In former times, the same was the custom among kings and queens. It is said that Queen Elizabeth was eating her Michael-

mas goose when she heard of the defeat of the Spanish Armada.

I wonder how our readers would like to be compelled to prepare for a festival, as were the English Catholics at the time of King Ethelred, who made many laws like the following, dated 1014: "It is enjoined that every Christian who is of age fast three days on bread and water, and raw herbs, before the Feast of St. Michael, and let every man go to confession and to church barefoot. Let every priest with his people go in procession three days barefoot, and let every one's commons (food) for three days be prepared without anything of flesh, as if they themselves were to eat it, both in meat and drink, and let this be distributed to the poor. Let every servant be excused from labor these three days, that he may the better perform his fast, or let him work what he will for himself. These are the three days,

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, next before the Feast of St. Michael. If any servant break his fast, let him make satisfaction with his hide (meaning that he be flogged), let the poor freeman pay thirty pence, the King's thane a hundred and thirty shillings; and let the money be divided among the poor."

"The King's thane" was a name given to any subject who was a comrade of the King and went to war in his company. From the foregoing it may be seen that the rich and noble, whatever their rank, were not excused from fasting, nor from paying the penalty for failing to do so. And while it may appear strange and cruel that the servants were ordered to be flogged, we must remember that in those days they were accustomed to it, were fed and housed worse than the slaves of our own country, but were taken care of when they were ill, old, or crippled. Coming

down to more modern times, we can not say why it should be so, but it is a fact that while the name of Michael is quite common among the Germans, and the Saint is greatly honored in Germany, the term "Michel" is also applied to a lout, or silly boy,—one, in short, whose intellect is below the average. These people are, however, often very clever in some respects, as the following story will serve to illustrate:

There once lived, in a village in Germany, a tailor who had a son, not only named Michael, but who was also a "Michel," or very stupid fellow. To his share always fell the hardest tasks. As he did not seem to be able to learn to read, his father took him from school and sent him to tend a couple of cows he owned, which pastured in a valley not far from the village.

Every day after the garden was weeded, and other chores done, Michael was free to go and pass the rest of the time until

evening with his beloved cows. No one ever asked him what he did there; no one ever wondered whether he was not lonely, day after day, with only the cattle for company. For, besides those belonging to his father, the cows of the other villagers pastured in the same place, and Michael, for a few pennies weekly, was hired to look after them.

On the way to the pasture Michael had to pass the little church, a very old one, built of stone, in the days before the Reformation. Over the altar hung a picture of St. Michael, the work of some pious, but not very artistic painter. The Saint was clad in an armor of green and gold, bearing a gold and silver shield, a helmet of steel upon his head, beneath which fell a thick mass of dark brown curls, the very color of Michael's own. A fierce serpent with protruding tongue and horrible fangs was vainly trying to escape

from the pressure of St. Michael's foot. In one hand the Saint held a pointed dart, with which he pierced the body of the serpent.

Michael never passed the church without going in to say a few short prayers. To the heart of the lonely boy it was a great joy to be able to look up to his Patron Saint and think the curls on his own head were of exactly the same color as those which adorned the brow of the splendid Archangel. No one else had ever noticed the resemblance, and poor Michael would not have dared to breathe a word concerning it. He knew that his brothers and sisters, and even his father, would have laughed at him for thinking of such a thing. They were not cross or unkind to him; but often ridiculed him, and he was so used to it he did not mind it. But somehow he felt sure that his hair was like that in the picture, and the thought was

very pleasant to the boy ; it made a bond between them.

About this time a war broke out between France and Germany ; the country was full of soldiers, and there had been many battles fought. Not a few young men of the village had gone, and although Michael spoke but little, he heard everything, and was as fond of his country and her cause as any of the others, though they all thought him so stupid.

After a while the news came that the French were gaining many victories ; people began to be afraid that they would come and burn the village, as they had many others. Michael's little heart was full of sorrow, full of fears. He loved his home, the garden, the village, the church, the peaceful valley where he tended the cows. Every day now, when he stopped at the church, he folded his little hands, and prayed :

“Dear Saint Michael, I am only a poor little empty-head, but I love you. You are the greatest angel in heaven, the Captain of all the others. I am too small to fight, and too stupid, even if I were big. But I long to do something for my country. Please help me to do so, dear Saint Michael, and I will love and serve you all my life.”

One day, as Michael sat on a green bank, peeling willow twigs, with which his grandmother was to make baskets, he heard the sound of a galloping steed, and in a moment a soldier was seen in the distance, riding as fast as he could spur his horse, which was covered with foam and dust. As the boy sat fearful and open-mouthed, the soldier stopped and said to him:

“Boy, you look very stupid. I wonder if you are as stupid as you look?”

“No doubt I am, sir,” replied Michael,

wondering if he were going to be killed the next moment. But then he saw that the soldier's uniform was that of the German army, and he no longer felt afraid.

"Well, your stupidity may save us both," said the man. "They will never think of accusing you of anything. Tell me, boy, do you love your country?"

"That I do, with all my heart," answered Michael; "I would die to save it."

"You are not so stupid, after all," the man went on. "But time is precious; I must not waste it. Take this paper and hide it, and do not reveal to any one where it is, until you can take it to the Burgomaster of your village." With these words, the soldier handed a small piece of paper to the boy, who received it with trembling fingers.

"Hide it, hide it," cried the man, as he galloped ahead, and soon turning a sharp defile of rock which jutted out at the

other side of the valley, he went back the way he had come, though by another road.

“Where shall I hide this?” said Michael to himself, as he clutched the bit of paper tightly in his fingers. “Why didn’t the sergeant himself take it to the Burgo-master? Maybe it is a joke! But no, he looked too serious and alarmed for that. Of course it is a letter. I can not read it, but I may look at it.”

But when the boy opened and glanced at the long, narrow-folded billet, he could see nothing but marks of different sizes. It was a cipher letter.

“Anyway, whatever it is, it has something to do with my country. I must hide it, as I can not take it to Herr Messner now,” said Michael. “I can not leave my cows. What shall I do? Maybe I had better sit on it. But no, if any one comes to look for it, he may tell me to stand

up, and then he will see it. What shall I do with it? St. Michael, enlighten me!"

As he uttered these last words aloud to his beloved Patron Saint, a sudden thought entered his brain. In fancy he could see the piercing eyes of the picture looking down upon him from beneath the clustering hair, so thick and curly. Michael's stupid face grew bright, he ran his hand through his own bushy head, and when he took it away, the paper was no longer between his fingers. He had hidden it in his hair.

He sat down on the bank again, and presently heard once more the sound of galloping feet. But this time there was more than one horse, and in a moment three soldiers came into view, attired in a uniform the like of which Michael had never seen. It was that of the French Cuirassiers. But, although the boy had

never before laid eyes on a French soldier, he had seen and known some Frenchmen, as his village was not far from the border. And he knew these men, with their sharp features, dark eyes, black hair, and slender build, for followers of Napoleon Bonaparte, and he was not afraid of them, for he had asked St. Michael to help him.

The men paused in front of him.

"We wish to ask you some questions," said one of them.

Michael gazed at him as stupidly as he knew how.

"Are you a fool?" asked another, taking in the uncouth figure, the vacant face, and wide-open mouth at a glance.

"I think so," replied Michael. "Every one tells me I am a fool."

"And you look like one. What are you doing here?"

"Minding the cows."

"Fit work for an idiot. Can you see?"

"Yes, my sight is good!"

"Who passed this way last?"

Michael scratched his head. "Two of the cows were fighting, and they ran toward the village. But they will come back again; they always do."

The three men laughed aloud.

"Have you seen a man on horseback?"

Again the boy scratched his head.

"You must be a very dirty fellow, not to be able to keep your hands away from your head," said one of the soldiers, a neat-looking man — considering the circumstances.

"I — I have often seen a man on horseback," replied Michael, with a stupid stare.

"But to-day?"

"Yes, to-day also. Our pastor has a horse —"

"He may not have it long."

Michael's face fell. What a terrible thing it would be if through him the good

priest should lose his horse ! But he could not help it now, the mischief had been done. Yes, he thought, I am a fool, sure enough, but I will try now to be as wise as I can, till I get rid of these fellows. Then I may be able to run and warn our kind priest to lock up his horse. I saw it grazing in the field this morning.

"Come on, come on," cried the man who seemed to be the leader, "we are wasting time here. The fellow must have taken the other road. This oaf can tell us nothing."

"You are right, good sirs," mumbled Michael, still with his hands in his hair. "I know nothing. I am a fool. Therefore I can tell you nothing."

"We are on the wrong trail," said the leader. "Let us turn back to the main road. And there may have been a mistake after all. Let us go."

Without another word to the boy, they

wheeled their horses around, and were soon lost to view.

When he could hear them no longer, Michael drew the paper from his hair, and regardless of his cows, ran first to the Burgomaster and related what had passed.

"You are a fine fellow, Michael," said the Mayor. "Not such a fool, after all. I shall remember this. The paper you have brought me contains news which may save our village from being destroyed. It tells us how to prevent the enemy from entering here. I must send it to headquarters at once."

Then Michael ran to the priest, told him he had better hide his horse, and related what had occurred.

"But how did you think of hiding the paper in your hair, Michael?" he inquired.

"Because I prayed to St. Michael."

"I can not exactly understand," said the priest.

"I have always noticed that his hair is like mine, Father, if I may be so bold," replied the boy, blushing as he spoke. "And I have thought that maybe I am not so silly as I might be, if my hair were not like St. Michael's own. It does not seem to me that a real fool could have the curls of a saint."

"It is true, Michael," said the priest, laying his hand on the boy's head. "It is true that your hair is like that of the picture. You have pretty hair — I had not noticed it before."

"Yes, Father, it is pretty. I know that," said the boy simply. "And I hid the paper in my hair. The men laughed at me for scratching my head. But I was not doing that; I was hiding the bit of paper."

"And you love St. Michael?"

"I love him dearly."

"In future he must take care of you."

And I will look after you myself. I will teach you myself. You are no fool, my boy."

Michael had saved not only the village, but the whole neighborhood round about. Now that he had become a hero, people no longer laughed at him, and he began to have a better opinion of himself. He went to school again; learned to read and write; and continued to be a good and pious boy. When he was seventeen he went to the monastery of St. Meinrad, where he became a lay-brother. He lived to be a very old man, and often told this story to the children, as I have told it to you. You may be sure he always continued to be a devout client of his Patron, the valiant Archangel.

The principal thing to be considered about St. Michael is the great fidelity with which he clung to Almighty God. Brave and loyal as he was, he had no desire to

set himself up against the God who had created him out of nothing. Unlike Lucifer, he was content to be a soldier, a servant, a messenger of the Lord of Hosts.

If, then, we desire to dwell in heaven in company with the angels, we must lead on earth the life of angels. They intercede with God for us, they help us to subdue our passions, they guard and guide us through the trials of this world. There can be nothing more beautiful than the image which the thought of the Prince of the Angels recalls to our minds — that of an intrepid and angelic follower of God clothed with the armor of faith, the sword of faith in his hand, and beneath his foot the proud head of the old serpent, crushed and vanquished through the power of loyalty sublime, and the strength which is of God.



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

PATRON SAINTS

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

SCARCELY had the Society of Jesus been founded by St. Ignatius when it began to number saints among its members. Side by side with that of its great founder is written the name of Francis Xavier, the Apostle of the Indies. He was a man apart from his fellow-men.

This great Saint had royal blood in his veins; he was descended from the kings of Navarre. His father, Don John Grasso, was a lawyer of renown in Spain. His mother also came of a distinguished family. As she was the last of her line, some of her sons took her name — that of Xavier. Francis was the last of many children, and

was born in the castle of Xavier, about six leagues from the town of Pamplona. It was on the 7th of April, 1506, that he first saw the light of day. He had a beautiful disposition, and learned early from his pious parents habits of virtue. When he had reached a proper age they sent him to the University of Paris to finish his studies. There St. Ignatius met him and tried to win him to the holy cause he had joined. But Francis, though he led a virtuous life in the midst of great temptations, wished to make a name for himself in the world. He was not at all attracted by the poverty of St. Ignatius, who lived on the alms he received from others. But to St. Ignatius himself he was attracted when he learned that he had been a brave soldier, and like himself was of a noble family of Spain. They quickly became intimate, and as soon as Ignatius had won the esteem of Xavier he began to repeat to him again

and again, "What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Francis Xavier thought this over and finally declared himself ready to join the Society of Jesus.

From the first he had an ardent desire to become a missionary to the Indies; but two other fathers had been appointed for that work by St. Ignatius. However, one of them fell ill, and Xavier was chosen in his stead. By this time he had already been ordained to the priesthood.

St. Francis Xavier sailed for the Indies on board the flagship *St. James* on his own birthday, as he entered his thirty-sixth year. The quickest voyage to the Indies at that time was not made under six months, as there was a journey of fifteen thousand miles to be performed from the port of Lisbon, from which they started. After a voyage of thirteen months, during which he remained some time on the

many to life. We will relate some of these miracles, which were numbered by hundreds.

The Saint was once traveling with two young Indians when night fell, and the youths retired to a hut to rest, while the Saint sought another, where he might pray at his ease. Venomous serpents are very common in India, and one of these hooded snakes bit Anthony, one of the young men, in the foot. When the other boy awoke next morning, he could not arouse his companion. Pulling from under him the mat on which they had both been lying, he screamed in horror as he saw a huge snake glide forth and run away.

He ran crying to St. Francis, exclaiming: "O Father, Anthony is dead. A serpent bit him while he slept, and he died of the poisonous wound."

"Come," said the Saint, "let us go and look at him; he may not be dead."

On reaching the cabin he knelt down beside the body, already swollen and livid, as happens when death is caused by a serpent's bite. After a short prayer he touched the foot with spittle, and taking the dead boy by the hand, he said, "Anthony, in the name of Jesus Christ, arise."

The child at once sprang to his feet, healthy and strong as before.

Again, while staying for a time in a village on the same coast, called Combutura, St. Francis was in a little church dedicated to St. Stephen, the first martyr. Suddenly he heard sounds of weeping outside and, inquiring the cause, was told that a mother was bringing her son, who had been drowned, to be buried. The Saint, filled with pity, went forth to meet her. As soon as she saw him and met the look of pity in his beautiful eyes, hope arose in her heart. Throwing herself at his feet, she begged him to implore the God who re-

fused him nothing to restore her son. St. Xavier knelt down, said a prayer, and commanded the young man to arise. He did so, alive and well, and the sorrowful weeping of the mother was changed to tears of joy.

Sometimes, when he was trying to make converts and their hearts would not open to his burning words, he would raise his eyes to heaven, and begin to speak of them to God. Concluding in these words:

“Be pleased now, on this day, to give this glory to the merits of Thy holy name, and award this recompense to the blood of Thy Son. Soften and subdue the hearts of these people.”

On one occasion, feeling sure that his prayer would be heard, he turned to the crowd and said: “Since you will not yield belief to God, who speaks to you by my mouth, let me see whether anything will be enough to convince you of the truth.

What proof will satisfy?" Then turning to a grave that had been closed the day before, he ordered it to be opened, and the man that had been dead came forth, and the people shouted, "Great is the God of the Christians, and true is the law which the Father teaches," and then they were all baptized.

The great kindness of St. Francis Xavier made him lend a willing ear to all who were in distress. A gold mine would not have been large enough to furnish him with help for those he wished to succor.

A soldier who had been robbed by pirates was cast helpless upon a strange coast. In due time he returned to his home and, meeting Father Francis, he appealed to his pity. The Saint, knowing he had nothing to give, still from the force of habit put his hand in his pocket and found he had not even a penny. "Brother, the Lord will provide," he said,

and walked on. After a moment, having uttered a silent prayer, he put his hand in his pocket again and drew forth fifty pieces of money. He gave it to the soldier, who quickly spread the news of the miracle.

Only to name the different villages and towns in which St. Francis labored and made converts, always working miracles, would fill pages. He finally returned to Goa, and after a short time began to prepare for another voyage. He had long wished to visit Japan. The circumstances which led to the attainment of this project are very interesting.

A young Japanese called Augier, of noble family and well educated, was not satisfied with his religion. Through the Portuguese who traded with his country he learned something of Christianity. But as they were better versed in merchandise than Christian doctrine, they advised him

to pass over to Malacca, where he would find a certain Father Francis Xavier, who could tell him all he wanted to know. Augier was not sufficiently troubled in mind to undertake a journey so long and tedious for such a purpose. However, something which occurred soon after led him to do that for the safety of his body which he would not do for the salvation of his soul. He quarreled with a man, slew him without meaning to do so, and a friend took him on board his ship about to sail for Malacca. After a great many disappointments he at last succeeded in meeting St. Francis Xavier. A holy friendship was at once formed between them, and Augier was baptized, together with two of his servants. Some time afterward, danger from his enemies being passed, Augier, now called "Paul of the Holy Faith," set sail with Francis Xavier for Japan, which the apostle was burning with zeal to convert.

Arrived at their destination, the Saint at once began to preach, and here took place another miracle. His sermons were a mixture of Portuguese, Latin, Spanish, Indian, and a few words of Japanese learned from Paul; but wherever he went, the immense crowds who followed him understood his every word. The Japanese were then, as they still are, an elegant and polite race, and the noble bearing, fine appearance, gentle demeanor, and polished manners of the missionary won them immediately. He had obtained permission from the Emperor to preach Christianity, while the example of Paul and his companions did much to inspire respect for the Catholic religion in the hearts of the pagans. In less than two months Francis Xavier baptized more than five hundred of the highest nobles, which rendered his labors among the common people easy. But he was not without crosses, here as elsewhere. As

he was preaching one day, a miserable wretch approached close and spat into his face. All fixed their eyes on the preacher, to see what he would do. Without even turning his head to look at the miscreant, he took out his handkerchief, wiped his face, and continued his sermon. Such mastery of self is highly prized in Japan. A very learned man among the multitude exclaimed: "That religion must surely be divine which gives strength to its followers to practice such virtue. Nature, left to itself, would be unable to do so." The result was numerous conversions. For two years he continued his wonderful missionary work, and when he sailed from Japan to return to India, he left behind him hundreds of thousands of Christians. About the middle of the nineteenth century, when the ports of Japan were opened to the world, descendants of these Christians were found still faithful to the teach-

ings of St. Francis, though no priest had visited their country for hundreds of years.

The next project of St. Francis Xavier was the conversion of China. He was advised by his friends not to undertake it. In the first place, because of the great hardships he must encounter; and secondly, because the Chinese were so prejudiced against foreigners that they would surely put him to death. But the Saint was determined, and formed the plan of entering China through the kingdom of Siam. But God had designed for him another port — that of heaven, to which he now invited his faithful servant.

It would seem that St. Francis had a feeling that his death was near, or at least that he would never return to Goa.

“How soon shall we see you again, Father Francis?” asked a friend.

“In this life never,” he replied. “It

must therefore be in heaven, or in the valley of Jehoshaphat." And later he said to some men who were with him at San-cian, "Brethren, let us prepare for death; for within the space of a year the greater number of us shall be dead." Before a year had expired six of them were dead, Xavier of the number.

The journey was but well begun when St. Francis was seized with a fever, which so prostrated him that he begged them to allow him to land. They did so, and a kind-hearted Portuguese, seeing him lying on the beach where they had left him in a sharp north wind, took him to his own poor hut. On Friday, December 2, 1552, his pure soul left the body, as casting his eyes tenderly upon the crucifix he cried out, "In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped; let me not be confounded forever." The people of the ship, which had been waiting, came to the hut as soon as he was dead, and throw-

ing themselves on their knees began to kiss his hands and feet. The poor man who had sheltered him dressed the body in its vestments, put it into a large case, and, filling this with quicklime, buried it, that the flesh might be consumed and bones be taken back to Goa on the return voyage of the ship.

But when they returned and uncovered the grave, the flesh of the apostle was found to be firm and white, as though the Saint were in a gentle slumber. The vestments had not been destroyed by the lime, and a sweet fragrance filled the air around. From that day until November, 1616, the body remained in the same condition. At that time the Portuguese removed the right arm as a relic, and since then the flesh has seemed to wither, though it is still incorrupt after nearly five hundred years, so that he who worked so many miracles during life remains himself a miracle after death.

He was the most mortified of men. On shore his bed consisted of ropes rather wide apart, without either mattress or pillow; and on the floor was a large stone on which he rested his head more often than on even his poor couch.

When at sea the cable was his pillow, and the bowdeck, his bed; he ate so little that people wondered how he lived. To the Order to which he belonged he was devoted with all his soul; many a time did he utter this expression, "If ever I forget thee, O Society of Jesus, may my own right hand be forgotten!"

Such was St. Francis Xavier, all severity and rigor with himself, all gentleness and compassion to others. Toward his religious brethren, over whom as provincial at Goa he was superior, he was a real father. He never sent any one of them on a mission without first learning if he were able to undertake it. To the weak he appor-

tioned the easiest work; to the strong the hardest; to the sick he was an angel of mercy. Sinners felt drawn toward holy things and their sins grew hateful to them when talking to him, though he may have spoken to them no word of God; pious souls found the greatest consolation in conversing with him. Whenever any of his plans failed, so great was his humility that he ascribed the cause to his own sins, never to those of others. He was revered even by the pagans as a man sent from heaven; wherever he made his appearance, ports and ships saluted him with salvos of artillery, cities and villages poured forth their inhabitants to greet him; hymns were sung; garments were spread in his path; men raised him aloft and bore him in triumph on their shoulders. Idolatrous kings, despite their idolatry, surnamed him "the great father, the wonder-worker, the saint." It was

a common thing to say, "When Father Francis does not work a miracle, it is a miracle."

Sanctity breathed from his very presence ; no one who heard him speak or spake with him ever forgot his words. Little children whom he had gathered about him loved him tenderly ; after he had left them they kept his memory green in their hearts and in turn transmitted their regard to their own children. A Jesuit Father who had spent several years in India recently told the writer that there are still in various parts of that country Christians whose forefathers were converts of St. Francis Xavier. At one such port touched at by the steamer in which he was returning, the travelers were told that the inhabitants would never do any unloading or loading of ships on Sunday, no matter how great the need. The people would not even come out in

their boats. And so it proved. On Sunday morning they reached the little town. Vainly did the sailors try to get them to come to the ship — it was Sunday. The priest was very desirous of saying Mass for them, but could not gain their attention. At length, toward evening, a couple of boats were seen approaching, to make arrangements for unloading the ship on the morrow.

“Why did you not come when we signaled?” asked the captain. “This is a priest here beside me; he wanted to say Mass for you.”

Nothing could be more real than their regrets. “Father, we are sorry,” they cried. “Come ashore with us now and give us Benediction.”

The good Jesuit willingly did so. He was highly edified by the devotion of those simple people who an hour later rowed him back to the ship. They were

both pious and well instructed, though they seldom saw a priest. But they knew all about St. Francis, and held his memory dear. The same Jesuit Father declares that no hamlet or village ever visited by St. Francis Xavier has ever suffered from that terrible malady, the plague, which ravages India.

It is doubtful if ever there was a soul more humble than that of St. Francis Xavier. Endowed with every gift of soul and body that makes man but a little lower than the angels, he considered himself the most worthless of creatures. The conversions that followed his preachings, the miracles which attended them, the joy with which he was welcomed whenever he came to visit a mission, the sorrow that ensued upon his departure, the crowds that hung upon his every exhortation, were continual marvels to him.

“How good, how good God is!” he

would say, "to make use of so unworthy an instrument as I am to increase his glory."

Again when men raised him aloft and bore him on their shoulders, when garments were spread in his path, he would say, hoping for humiliations to follow: "Thus, O Lord, whose unworthy servant I am, did they honor and exalt Thee on Thy entrance into Jerusalem. But it was only a preface to the crown of thorns and the scourging, to the weary way of the cross and Calvary. Grant, O Lord, that I may be one with thee in thy martyrdom as in thy triumph."

The spirit of St. Francis Xavier, we are fain to believe, still looks down with love and longing upon Japan, where hundreds of years after his death, Christians were found preaching the Gospel he had preached. The Japanese may yet claim him as their apostle!

And it is small wonder that he protects

the scenes of his labors where he died, and where his body rests. No one ever visits Goa without also visiting his tomb. It is not in the new city, but in old Goa, that he lies. It would long since have been abandoned but for the ancient churches that still remain, about thirty in number. A few are kept in repair, but the others are crumbling away. The finest of those still standing is the church which contains the tomb of St. Francis Xavier. It is a marvel of gorgeous gilt work. It is full of treasures, in the shape of silver lamps in the chapel of St. Francis, jeweled vestments, crosses, and chalices. The tomb itself is of Italian porphyry, surmounted by a silver coffin, delicately carved and chased. Here come pilgrims by the thousand, Indians and Mohammedans as well as the Europeans who journey there to pray at the sacred tomb. It is the desire of every priest who visits it

to say Mass within the inclosure, but all who do so must seek the spot very early in the morning. To remain in old Goa over night is to court death for any stranger, as it is full of malaria. They come after day has dawned to perform this pious duty.

It remains only for us to say, as the Church expresses herself in the prayer proper to the Feast of St. Xavier on the 3d of December, "May we, who venerate his glorious merits, imitate the example of his virtue."



ST. PATRICK.

ST. PATRICK

THE time of the birth and of the death of St. Patrick and the place of each have long been subjects of dispute. However, the best authorities believe that he was a native of Gaul, being, according to tradition, a grand-nephew of St. Martin of Tours, and that he was born in the fourth century. His mother Conchessa was the niece of St. Martin, and probably followed him to Tours, where she married Calphurnius, the father of our Saint. The apostle was called Succath, signifying warlike, in his infancy and childhood; it was Pope Celestine who gave him the name Patrick. Although the nephew of a great saint, we do not find any indication of early piety in St. Patrick, though he

was very carefully brought up by his parents. His morals were pure, his disposition mild and amiable, and he had the power of attracting all who knew him.

One day when he was in his sixteenth year, while playing on the beach with some of his companions, they were seized and taken captive by pirates cruising along the shore. He was carried off to Ireland and there sold to a ruler in the northern part of the island, in the same manner as Joseph was sold into Egypt. It is probable that Almighty God, who had destined Patrick to carry the light of Christianity to distant parts of the island, permitted this trouble to fall upon him in order to accustom him to hardship, and to enable him to learn the language in which he was to convey the truths of the Gospel to the Irish nation. His master placed him in charge of his flocks, and in the solitude of his work Patrick began to

meditate on the great truths of religion. In his Confession he gives an account of the use he made of his time while in captivity.

“I was always careful,” he says, “to lead my flocks to pasture, and prayed fervently during the day; I became strengthened in the belief, fear, and love of God, and prayed at least a hundred times a day, and as often during the night. When I inhabited the forests and mountains, I said my prayers before daylight, and never experienced, either in frost, snow, or rain, that negligence which I now feel, as I was then fired with the spirit of God.”

And thus in the solitude of his vigils, stretched beneath the drooping branches of a tree to keep off the sweltering sun, or sheltered by an overhanging rock when storms swept through the fastnesses of the hills, Patrick heard the voice of God

speak to his soul. He never expected to see his home or kindred again; to all appearances he was destined to spend the remainder of his life herding cattle. A less noble spirit would have murmured and complained, giving way to regret and despair; a weak or vicious soul would soon have descended to the level of the beasts around him, but the soul of Patrick was cast in a higher and finer mold.

After he had been some time in bondage, he was quietly sleeping one night when he had a dream in which he heard a voice saying:

“Patrick, arise and return to thy own country.”

“Who calls me?” asked the youth.

“Patrick,” repeated the voice, “arise and depart into thy own country. Even now a ship awaits thee in which thou canst sail thither.”

Patrick was so impressed that he at

once arose from his bed of skins, made his way to the seashore, and there beheld a vessel with sails already set about to begin its voyage.

But the sailors would not take him aboard, probably because he had no money to pay his passage. He began to retrace his steps, when the captain, pitying his distress, called him back. After three days' sailing they reached land; but the captain, unfamiliar with the coast, anchored in a wild and unfrequented region. For twenty-seven days they wandered about without any food except the few provisions they had taken from the ship. At length they said to Patrick, who lost no opportunity to speak to them of God:

“Why not pray for relief? If God is so good, he will hear thee and send us succor.” Patrick prayed, and very soon after they met a herd of swine. They

killed one, cooked and ate it, and soon felt new life pulsating in their veins.

When Patrick regained his home, he was received with great joy by his family, but his thoughts dwelt continually on the land of his captivity. In vain did he seek to turn his thoughts to other things. The call of Ireland was ever in his ears. By day he thought only of that land which had used him shabbily, but which he had learned to love; by night he dreamed of its green and fertile shores. Once while he slept, says one of his chroniclers, Patrick saw standing before him one of the natives of that island, bearing in his hand a bundle of letters, one of which he gave him to read. It began with these words in Latin, "The voice of the Irish." While reading this letter he thought he heard the cries of the inhabitants of the neighborhood of a forest, in the territory of ~~Tiramalgaid~~, now the barony of Tirawly

in the county of Mayo, entreating him to go to them. This so affected him that he could not finish reading the letter, whereupon he awoke.

At that time he was about twenty-three years of age. It is said that he went first to the monastery of Marmontiers, which was built near Tours by St. Martin. From him he received the clerical tonsure and the monastic habit. It is said that after this he set out for Rome, where he was admitted among the students of St. John Lateran. Later he spent some time in the diocese of St. Germain, at Auxerre, to whom he confided his great desire of returning to Ireland. It was with this in mind that on the death of St. Palladius, the good Bishop sent Patrick again to Rome with letters of introduction to Pope Celestine, who received him with great kindness.

It will now be necessary to say a few

words about St. Palladius and the state of religion in Ireland at that period. It is held by many that until the time of St. Patrick Ireland was a heathen nation; that it was he who first planted the cross upon her shores. But this is a great error. While it is true that St. Patrick preached Christianity in portions of the island which had not yet been converted, or which had relapsed into paganism, we find as early as the first century traces of Christianity in Ireland, brought there from Asia and Africa. Some of these Irish Christians had even gone to preach the Gospel in other pagan countries of Europe. But it was the good Pope Celestine I., who, seeing the devout disposition of the people, and the facility with which they received the word of God, sent them Palladius, an archdeacon. He was ordained Bishop of all Ireland, and then set out for his distant see. He was accompanied by

twelve missionaries, who took with them several volumes of the Scriptures and some relics of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and others of the first martyrs. He landed in the province of Leinster, where he was coldly received by the pagans. After a short career he was expelled from Ireland by a prince of the country. Some chroniclers relate that he suffered martyrdom, but this has not been confirmed.

The times were now ripe for the mission of St. Patrick. He went to Rome full of his great desire; he had the recommendation of St. Germain, his patron; and Pope Celestine very soon became aware, by the evidences of learning, zeal, and piety he displayed, that the mission of converting Erin could be intrusted to no worthier hands. Celestine consecrated him bishop, and then appointed several learned and holy men to accompany him.

Our readers will remark that considerable stress has been laid on the fact that the missionaries to Ireland took with them books, particularly the Holy Scriptures, and that the Pope was careful to choose the band from among not only the most pious, but the most learned. If Ireland was at that time the rude and barbarous country her enemies and detractors would have us believe, it would not have been necessary to take these measures. But, on the contrary, it had already become famous for its wise legislators and its learned priests, or Druids. It was to confute the arguments of these clever pagans that the Pope was careful to meet them with weapons equally powerful.

St. Patrick landed on the eastern coast of Leinster, in the fourth year of the reign of Laogare, monarch of all Ireland, and began to preach in the province from which St. Palladius had been banished in the

preceding year. It would seem that Ireland had been waiting for Patrick, for no sooner had he again set his foot upon her emerald shore than the people began to follow him by hundreds, while God was pleased to manifest the authority of his mission by many signs and miracles.

As was natural, the Druids were opposed to St. Patrick, but many of the highest nobles in the land were drawn by the force of his arguments, and converted. After this his progress throughout the island was one of triumph. His doctrine of meekness and brotherly love seemed to appeal to a people then as now noted for their tenderness of heart. Churches and monasteries were founded in almost incredible numbers. The flower of the Irish youth laid down their arms in order to consecrate their lives to God's service. The fairest maidens in the kingdom came to offer their innocence and beauty to

Christ, choosing him for their eternal spouse.

After St. Patrick had been some time in Ireland he resolved to go and celebrate the Feast of Easter in the city of Tara, the usual residence of the kings of the country. He wished to be there at that particular time, because it was the season of the assembly when the princes, judges, and Druid priests were gathered together. He felt that if he could make a good impression on these dignitaries, the common people would be more easily influenced everywhere he might go.

Our Saint having met on the way a prince named Lesgnen, Lord of Meath, was invited to accept his hospitality, which he did. God rewarded the kindness of heart of this pagan chief by bestowing upon him and all his household the grace of conversion. St. Patrick baptized them, and was especially pleased with a

young son of Lesgnen, to whom he gave the name of Binen, or Benignus, which means blessed, at his baptism. This young man became much attached to St. Patrick, followed him in his journeyings, and made such progress in piety and virtue that he was ordained a priest and afterward succeeded St. Patrick as Bishop of Armagh, where the Saint built a beautiful church and monastery. The Bishop of Armagh has always been known as the Primate of all Ireland.

After leaving the house of Lesgnen, St. Patrick proceeded to Tara. Having pitched his tents on the left bank of the river Boyne, he began to make ready for the ceremonies of the following day. It was customary when an assembly was convened at Tara to make a bonfire on the preceding night, so that the people of the surrounding country would realize the solemnity of the occasion and prepare

to attend. It was forbidden to have any other fire in the neighborhood during the festival. St. Patrick, either ignorant of this or wishing to confound the superstition of the Druid priests, caused a large bonfire to be made in front of his camp. The Druids, alarmed at this, complained to the king, saying that there was a prophecy which said that the man who would be allowed to build and keep burning a fire in opposition to theirs would, in time, with his successors, hold the empire of Ireland forever. This prophecy, which, like the Jews with regard to the Messias, the Druids interpreted as relating to an earthly reign, meant only a spiritual kingdom, and as such has been fulfilled.

The king sent word to St. Patrick to appear before him, ordering the whole assembly to remain seated when he arrived, in order to show the Christian missionary in what contempt he was held. *Erc, one*

of those present, disobeyed this order: he arose, uncovered his head, and offered the Saint his place in the assembly. St. Patrick cast his eye upon him, thanked him graciously, and made such an impression on the mind of the courteous Erc that, having listened attentively to the word of God which the Saint began to preach before the multitude, he at once became a Christian. The preaching of the Apostle at Tara was accompanied by many miracles which went far to convert numbers of the most distinguished lords of the island.

At the approach of Lent it was the custom of St. Patrick to retire to a high mountain, where, tradition says, he spent the forty days without taking food. It is said that once, while staying on this mountain, he called together all the venomous snakes and reptiles of the country. He ordered them to depart into the sea. They obeyed him; and since that time,

says the legend, Ireland has been free from all venomous reptiles.

St. Patrick founded many schools in Ireland, which became so famous that students flocked to them from all Europe. The piety of the Irish monks was a shining example to the brethren throughout the civilized world.

Like all those whom God has chosen to do His special work for the salvation of souls, St. Patrick had his enemies. But God constantly held before him the shield of His protections, so that those who sought to do him ill were confounded.

Nothing in the history of Christianity is more wonderful than the rapid and complete conversion of the Irish nation. This sudden change can only be accounted for by the virtue of the apostle who was chosen to convert them, and the natural piety of the people. It can be said with truth that no other nation in the Christian

world received with so much joy the knowledge of the kingdom of God and the faith in Jesus Christ. Nothing could have been greater than the zeal with which they aided St. Patrick in destroying their idols and building churches for the worship of the true God. It may also be added that no other nation preserved its faith with more fortitude and courage during the persecution of centuries.

“Of all men,” says a chronicler, “the Irish are the most patient in fatigue, the most warlike; rarely do they suffer themselves to be cast down in the heaviest afflictions.” It is this character which has enabled them to endure and triumph over the persecution and oppression of centuries. It was the firm faith planted in their souls by their illustrious and beloved apostle which enabled them to endure and to transmit to their descendants the spirit of patience and fidelity,

they never lost when to profess the Catholic faith in Ireland was to be proscribed, hunted, and despised. It was this faith and invincible patience which upheld them when through the length and breadth of Ireland no priest dared show his face; when Mass was said only at midnight in caves and secret places; when the celebrant, minister of the Gospel, and school-master combined, worked in the disguise of a laborer by day and taught the children behind carefully curtained windows when night had fallen.

Neither is it unreasonable to suppose that St. Patrick was granted a prophetic insight into the future of the people whom he so loved and to whose salvation he dedicated his life. It well may be that he realized what was in store for them, that they would be driven by hundreds of thousands from their native shores, because, true to his sublime teachings, they

would not espouse an alien faith. If this vision of the future was granted him, he must also have seen that through persecution these exiles of Erin were to aid in evangelizing the world. For there is no corner of the globe where civilized man has set his foot that the sons of Ireland may not be found, and where Irishmen are, there is also the church, surmounted by the cross of Christ. And it is equally true that wherever they have thus raised the standard of the Almighty they have upheld with loyalty and reverence the name of the great St. Patrick.

Notwithstanding the labors of his apostleship, our Saint relaxed none of his austerities to the day of his death. He always traveled on foot, slept on the bare ground, and, according to some authorities, reached the great age of one hundred and twenty years before resigning his soul to God. It is said that he built three hundred

and sixty-five churches, consecrated more than three hundred bishops, and ordained nearly three thousand priests. So pious and devoted were the people during his time that they put aside a tenth of their goods every year to found churches and monasteries.

It was not until he had attained his ninetieth year, that St. Patrick thought of resting from his arduous labors. And even then every hour of his day was occupied. It is said that he daily recited the Apocalypse and the whole Psalter.

It is also related of him that he divided the night into three parts, the first part of which he recited fifty Psalms; the second he plunged into cold water in order to mortify that blessed flesh which had seldom or never revolted against Almighty God; the third part of the night he slept on a bed of stone, with another stone for a pillow. During these hours of

sleep he was oftentimes favored with visions.

On one occasion his good angel appeared to him, and according to his "Confessions" spoke to him thus of a purpose which St. Patrick had strongly at heart. He had always desired to pass his last days and end them at Armagh, and it was while he was on his way to that city that, in the silence of the night, Victoricus, the angel, appeared to him, and said:

"It is not at Armagh that thy resurrection shall be decreed; go back to Saul, the place from whence thou camest, for it is there God decreed that you shall die, not at Armagh. God hath granted this, that thy dignity and rule, thy devotion and teaching, shall abide in Armagh, even as if thou wert thyself alive there."

St. Patrick was not a little grieved at these words, but believing they came from God, through his messenger, he quickly

did as he had been commanded, and returned the way he had come. Later the angel went into minute details concerning his burial, knowing that many places would contest with each other for the possession of the relics of the Saint whom all Ireland loved and revered.

“At thy burial,” said the heavenly visitor, “two young oxen shall be chosen from the herds in Conall’s territory to carry the bier, and they shall be permitted to stray until they stop of themselves. Where they shall halt, there shall Patrick be buried. Deep shall thy body be buried, to the height of a man, and from the grave thy remains shall not be removed.”

St. Patrick had commissioned St. Bridget to make his shroud. When he arrived at the monastery of Saul, he found it awaiting him; then he laid down and having received the last sacraments, he lifted up his eyes, and saw Jesus awaiting him, sur-

rounded by angels. As his companions, weeping and lamenting, gathered about his bed St. Patrick bade them refrain, and clasping his hands, with his eyes upraised to heaven, he gave up his pure soul to God.

St. Patrick was buried, not in the monastery of Sabhal, where he died, nor in the church of Armagh, where he wished to die, but in the city of Down. Among the many miracles which St. Patrick wrought was the restoration of a young prince to life. Filled with joy and gratitude, his mother, the queen, ordered that each day part of the food served at her table should be given to the poor. As this miracle was wrought on St. Michael's Day it gave rise to a custom still practised in old Irish families of killing a sheep on that day and giving it to the poor.

The great love of the Irish for the shamrock, which is their national emblem, owes its origin to the circumstance that St.

Patrick used a sprig of the three-leaved little plant to explain the mystery of the Trinity to the assembled chieftains of Ireland on the hills of Tara. The Feast of St. Patrick is kept on the 17th of March. There is no saint in the calendar whose festival is more universally observed although it always occurs in Lent. In Ireland a dispensation from fasting is granted on that day, on which joyful occasion the exiles of Erin "clasp a girdle round the earth with hands of friendly brotherhood."



ST. CHARLES BORROMEO.

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ON October 2, 1538, in the castle of Arona, on the borders of beautiful Lake Maggiore, was born St. Charles Borromeo, the patron and model of all priests. He was the son of Gilbert Borromeo, Lord of Arona, and Margaret de Medicis. Both his parents were very pious, and were known throughout their native country of Lombardy for their great virtues. The Count of Borromeo was a very charitable man, very generous to the poor; and when persons would say to him that if he went on in this manner his children would be beggars, he would answer, "If I do all I can for the children who have been left orphans, God will take care of mine." The result was seen

in the conduct of his offspring, not one of whom failed to do credit to these pious parents.

But it was upon Charles that God seemed to lavish His choicest gifts. When he was a very little child he found his greatest delight in prayer and holy things, and while the others built forts and castles in play, he was always to be found making chapels and churches. His parents soon began to see that God had destined him for His service. Unlike many other fathers and mothers, in their own day as well as in ours, they did not try to divert his thoughts from holy things to the things of this earth by taking him to foolish plays and other amusements, which are often sources of temptation to the young. When he was only twelve years old they allowed him to set out for the Benedictine Abbey in the territory of Arona, where several of the Borromeo family were

members of the great order. Later he was sent to the famous University of Pavia. After the death of his father, in 1558, he returned to Milan in order to attend to some business connected with his property. While he was there he heard that his uncle, Cardinal de Medicis, had been elected Pope, under the title of Pius IV. As Milan was the native city of the Cardinal, great rejoicings were held, and it was not long before the new Pope sent for his nephew to come to Rome. Finding that he possessed all the wisdom with which he had been credited, the Pope lost no time in making him a Cardinal and, soon after, Archbishop of Milan.

Milan has always been one of the most celebrated among the cities of Italy. Its cathedral has been thought by many to be the finest in the world, after that of St. Peter's at Rome. St. Charles was only twenty-three years of age when he was

called upon to take charge of this important diocese. He accepted his new dignity in a spirit of obedience and humility, but he would have preferred to lead a quiet and retired life. Although he had a magnificent palace, and was surrounded by many attendants, according to the custom of the time and the dignity of his rank, his private apartments were very simply furnished, and in them he led the life of a hermit. It is related of him that when the most pious and learned Archbishop of Broga, Don Bartholomew of the Martyrs, came to Rome to visit the Pope, St. Charles hailed his appearance with joy, and opened his heart to him as follows:

“For a long time I have begged of God, with all the earnestness I possess, to enlighten me with regard to the state in which I live.” He then went on to describe the dangers and difficulties which

surrounded him. "If I followed my own inclination," he said, "I would at once retire into a monastery, there to spend the rest of my life. I beseech you, tell me what to do."

The venerable archbishop at once replied that Almighty God had placed him in the position he occupied, and that all that was required of him "was to fill it nobly and honorably; that God would never withdraw His helping hand from the willing soul." Thereafter Charles Borromeo never sought to rid himself of the burden which had been placed upon him. He at once set about reforming many abuses which existed in his diocese, established a seminary for priests, and through his influence caused other seminaries to be founded in various neighboring dioceses. In the time of St. Charles many of the clergy had become careless and indifferent; by founding seminaries for their education he

reformed many abuses, and his example worked wonders in all those ecclesiastics under his control. He fasted on bread and water; in his journeys he always prayed or studied on the road; he went every morning to confession, not wishing to have the smallest sin upon his conscience when he celebrated the holy sacrifice of the Mass. A holy confessor once said of him that a priest, by once hearing the confession of the Cardinal-Archbishop, might ever afterward imitate his humility, his charity, his meekness, his unworldliness, his fidelity to grace and contrition for having offended God. On one occasion he accidentally let the Host fall while giving holy communion. So great was his horror and regret at this occurrence that he could not be persuaded God had not permitted it to happen through some fault of his own. He accordingly fasted for eight days afterward and abstained from

saying Mass for four days. This was a great deprivation to him, as he never omitted the daily celebration of the holy sacrifice. So earnest was he in his endeavors to have his clergy say Mass every day that he was very suspicious of those who did not. There is an incident related in this regard which shows what an influence true and persistent piety can do, however humble and obscure the instrument which God chooses for His purpose.

In 1572 the plague broke out in Italy. It was then that the Saint gave solid proof of his own virtue as well as the fortitude and constancy with which his good example had endowed his priests.

While eager to remain in the infected districts themselves, in order to minister to the sick and dying, they begged their beloved Archbishop to go away, as the preservation of his life was necessary both to the spiritual and temporal welfare of his people.

"But," argued the Saint, "is not a pastor obliged to lay down his life for his flock?"

They could not gainsay him.

"And to remain with them in time of danger?"

"Yes, but there are other shepherds, under-shepherds, who can take his place."

"No one can take the place of the master of the flock," replied the Archbishop, "no one, be his good will what it may. And how can the shepherd be expected to remain if the master runs away? What, then, could be said of a Bishop who would desert his people in time of need? It would be a shameful thing, and a cowardly thing. Say no more. With the stricken fold is my place; with them I shall remain."

Then he began to exhort the people as he went about from town to town, telling

them that they were being scourged for their sins, begging them to do penance, and redoubling his own prayers and austerities. He organized general processions, in which he walked barefoot, with a halter about his neck and a crucifix in his hands, from which he never seemed to turn his eyes, filled with tears of contrition and supplication. He offered himself as a victim for the people, preaching every day and going to the bedside of poverty and vice, exhorting the sick and administering the sacraments. When the pestilence had abated, St. Charles appointed a day for public thanksgiving and three days of prayer for those who had fallen victims to it.

Hospitality was with him a cardinal virtue. He entertained princes and prelates, generals and statesmen; the food they received at his table was plentiful but not luxurious, as he did not think an

Archbishop should set any other example than that of frugality. If the fare set before them did not please his guests, they were free to go elsewhere, though such a thing was unheard of. All esteemed it an honor to be invited there, and the salt which seasoned the food was the pious and learned conversation of the holy Bishop. He inherited immense riches, no part of which he spent upon himself. His liberality can still be seen in many beautiful buildings and monuments erected at his expense in Rome, Milan, and other parts of his diocese. The church of St. Praxedes in Rome, which gave him the title of Cardinal, he repaired at great cost. Churches, hospitals, seminaries, schools, orphan asylums, public fountains, and convents still bear witness to the generous spirit which prompted him to expend all he possessed in the service of God and his neighbor. He had a great devotion to the Passion of

Christ, which is in itself a mark of sanctity. It is impossible that any one should meditate upon the sublime sacrifice of Calvary without becoming filled with the spirit and charity of Christ. He always carried about with him a relic of the true cross. He also loved the Blessed Virgin with a deep affection, and went to her in all his necessities. It is said that in giving audiences the spirit of prayer and of the love of God so beamed in his countenance as to infuse his own devotion into the souls of his hearers. No one in temptation ever went to him without coming away strengthened in virtue, no despondent soul ever sought his aid without being cheered, no discouraged brother priest in the vineyard of the Lord ever returned to his charge without counting his work gain and the sacrifices worth while. St. Philip Neri declared that he had seen the face of the holy Archbishop glorified with

a celestial brightness. He used to say that the best preventive of sin was always to feel that we were walking in the actual presence of God. Said he, "One who begins every day of his life knowing himself to be in the presence of God must always make progress in God's service."

He could not be called an orator, because he had a defect in his speech, which, however, by constant effort, he almost entirely overcame. He was not a Basil nor a Chrysostom, but his sincere piety and real virtue gave his discourses a charm and a power over his hearers that a more gifted preacher sometimes fails to produce. People were carried away by what he said, not by the manner in which he said it. He was strenuous in the teaching of the Catechism, and established everywhere in his diocese schools of Christian Doctrine, with excellent regulations.

He knew well that on the children of one generation depend the religion and zeal of the next, and he spared no pains in having the little ones under his charge taught the truths of the Catholic religion.

In the year 1568 he undertook to reform the Order of the Umiliati, which had been founded in the eleventh century by some pious gentlemen of Milan who made religious vows. But they had become very lax, and when the holy Archbishop endeavored to make them change their manner of life, three of the principal men in the Order resolved to murder him. One of them, called Safarina, promised, for a certain sum of money to do the infamous deed.

He stole like a thief in the night to the church, where the holy Archbishop was saying evening prayers. It was crowded with people, offering their supplications to God, and at sight of them and of the holy

man in whose petitions they were joining with all their hearts, the assassin grew afraid, and an inward voice seemed to say to him, "Repent! repent!" But the devil had too fierce a hold on him for that. As the Archbishop pronounced these words of David, "Let not my heart be downcast, but do Thou preserve it fearless," the sound of a musket shot rang out through the church, and following the flash of the gun, the congregation saw that the Archbishop had been struck in the back. But as if by a miracle the ball glanced away, and he did not fall. "Seize the traitor!" cried the people, and although he sought to make his escape, he was unable to do so.

The authors of the plot were tried and found guilty. The holy prelate made every effort to save their lives, but did not succeed. Pius the Fifth suppressed the Order and distributed their wealth among charitable institutions. The bullet which

the assassin fired is still preserved at Bordeaux, and the musket ball is kept in the church of the Oblates in Milan.

It is said that St. Aloysius received his first holy communion from the hands of St. Charles Borromeo.

This event has been commemorated in several paintings. At the present time the picture over the main altar in the church of St. Aloysius in Washington, D.C., portrays this beautiful incident. It represents a chapel filled with courtiers and acolytes. The central figures are a stately Cardinal, with the face of a saint, in the act of administering holy communion to a boy with the countenance of an angel. They are St. Charles and St. Aloysius.

There is nothing more beautiful in the history of St. Charles than his friendship for the great St. Philip Neri. Although St. Philip was more than twice as old as the young priest when he went to Rome

at the command of his uncle the Pope, to be made a cardinal, these two holy souls were at once drawn to each other by the same angelic purity, simplicity, and piety. St. Philip was the gentlest of saints, St. Charles more rigid; but both of their hearts overflowed with charity. St. Charles always called his friend "Father Philip," consulted him on many occasions, and longed to have him, with some of his Oratorians, at Milan. There would have been no use in urging St. Philip to leave Rome when he felt bound to remain, but he sent several of his priests to Milan to found a house there. It seems that the rules of these Fathers did not meet, in all things, what the Archbishop desired, so they returned to Rome, while St. Charles founded the Order of Oblates, on much the same plan. This, however, did not interrupt the holy friendship of these two great saints.

When St. Charles had founded the Con-

gregation of the Oblates, he went to Rome to consult St. Philip about the Rules. But St. Philip declined to give any advice on the subject, saying that he was not competent to do so. In vain did the Cardinal beseech him. St. Philip would only smile and shake his head. Then occurred the following incident:

"Come, then, and take a drive with me, Father Philip," said St. Charles, hoping that while they were alone together in the carriage, away from the many interruptions that filled St. Philip's daily life, he would give him some opinion on the Rules.

"Very well," replied St. Philip, "I will go, provided you will allow me to take you wherever I wish."

"Well, then, be it so, Father Philip," rejoined the Archbishop, knowing his friend's ways. When they started on their drive, St. Philip ordered the coachman to

take them to the convent of the Capuchins. St. Charles thought that he was about to be introduced there to some learned man, who would condescend to give his opinion upon the Rules. But when they arrived, St. Philip said to the porter:

“Go to the garden and fetch Fra Felice da Cantalice.”

“And who is Fra Felice?”

“Only a simple lay brother, but well versed in holy things,” said St. Philip.

When Fra Felice made his appearance, St. Philip began to explain the errand on which they had come.

“But, Father Philip,” exclaimed the brother, “how can I do that, being only a poor ignorant man who does not know even how to read.”

“But we will read for you,” answered St. Philip, “and then you can tell us what you think, Fra Felice.”

St. Charles, who knew nothing of the

holiness of the poor lay brother, stood aghast at all this; but such was his love for St. Philip that he allowed him to proceed. And then very humbly, as the Rules were read to him, Fra Felice said what he thought of them, and even suggested some changes, which St. Philip noted on a slip of paper, and which were afterward made.

In this incident we do not know which to admire most, the ingenuity of St. Philip, the humility of St. Charles in accepting the judgment of the poor lay brother, or the obedience of Fra Felice in thus with the greatest simplicity giving his opinion of Rules drawn up by one of the greatest churchmen of the time, at the command of another who was known to be the holiest man in Rome. It shows the real sanctity of all three; but it is doubtful whether in our day any such occurrence could take place. People have lost the

simplicity that then existed, and it is a pity that it should be so, for it is the foundation of all true virtue.

St. Charles was very careful not to believe in accounts of visions, ecstasies, and miracles very common in that period, unless he had satisfied himself by strong proof that they were real. On one occasion a young woman pretended that she had received extraordinary favors from God. Many people believed in her; even the saint's confessor, Father Adorno, thought her sincere. But St. Charles would not go to see her, and after his death it was proved that she was an impostor. At the same time he had the greatest reverence for true piety.

Though his whole life was one continual prayer and austerity, St. Charles was in the habit of making retreats frequently in order that he might be able to perform his numerous duties in the most perfect

manner. At those times he seemed severed from all earthly ties. He seldom said Mass without shedding tears; a bishop deposed at his canonization that one day he saw a bright ray of light darting from him, a reflection of the light which illumined his soul.

The place which had the greatest charm for the saintly prelate was Mount Navara, situated on the Swiss frontier. The chapels here are very beautiful and devotional, the mysteries of the Passion being represented in all of them. In the year of 1584, St. Charles went thither with his confessor. While in this place he was attacked by an intermittent fever, which seized him every second day. He was still making his retreat, and wished to practice every mortification possible; but Father Adorno persuaded him to add a little straw to the plank which served him for a bed. On the fifth day of his retreat he prayed five hours

kneeling, and on the next day set out for Arona. Although it was night, he crossed the lake, laid the cornerstone of a college at Ascona next day, and then went back and slept in the boat, which, no doubt, aggravated his illness.

At length, unable any longer to walk about, he begged to be taken to Milan, where they bore him on a litter. After this he sank rapidly. Fully aware that his end was at hand, he received the last sacraments, and with these words, *Ecce, venio*, "Behold, I come," expired at the early age of forty-six on the night between the 3d and 4th of November.

Very soon after, Father Adorno saw him in a dream. He was surrounded by light, and, smiling, said, "I am happy; you will soon follow me." Father Adorno publicly affirmed this in a sermon and died a short time later.

St. Charles Borromeo was canonized by

Pope Paul V. in 1610. His remains lie in a crystal shrine of great value. The altar in the chapel where they rest is of solid silver. Lamps of gold and silver burn there night and day.

St. Charles was raised by God to renew the spirit of piety in the clergy who had grown careless and indifferent. But as he, their chief pastor, set them so great an example of piety and fidelity to his vocation, they soon began to be models of devotion. Princes, potentates, and laymen have united to honor and adorn the tomb of St. Charles; but it is the clergy principally who have beautified and remembered it. To this day their devotion continues, as they realize that the morals of the people depend very much upon the piety of their pastors. *It shall be as with the people, so with the priest.* "Thus," says one of his biographers, "is he honored who despised the world for Christ!"



ST. PHILIP NERI.

ST. PHILIP NERI

AMONG all the lives of the Saints, from the first martyrs of the Coliseum to those of our own time, we shall find none more attractive, more delightful, more unselfish and beautiful than that of St. Philip Neri. His was such a life that, though in his humility he himself could never know it, the effect of his example on the world about him was like the flutter of an angel's wing, a spark from the torches of Heaven, or, as our own poet Longfellow has written, "The passing of beautiful music."

With all the fervor of St. Peter and the firmness of St. Paul, he mingled the gentleness of St. John; one can never

think of him save as "loving and beloved."

Philip Neri was the son of Francisco and Lucrezia Neri, and was born in the city of Florence on the 22d of July, 1515. His parents, though not rich, were of noble blood and highly respected by all who knew them. From the first, Philip, who was a lovely child, singularly sweet and winning in manner, as well as handsome in person, attracted every one who met him. Unlike most children, who though charming and innocent live only for themselves and those about them, Philip's heart seemed always to be filled with the love of God and a true piety, fixed on Heaven and heavenly things.

Gentle, loving, studious, obedient, the ideal of all that is holy and innocent, everybody realized that in Philip Neri they saw an unusual child. Our Lord

Himself gave him special marks of protection in his earliest years. Once when Philip had been taken by his father and mother to spend the day in the country, he was playing about the garden of the house where they were visiting. A man came along on a donkey, carrying a pannier laden with fruit. While the owner was absent for a few moments, the child ceased his play and ran up to the place where the fruit vendor had halted. Wishing to have a ride, he mounted the animal and went briskly trotting along through the valley. When Philip desired to stop, the ass was not willing, and presently, turning off to a spot where a very deep cellar had been dug, it made a misstep and fell into the hole, carrying the boy with it. A woman who was walking along the road hurried to the spot, and seeing that the body of the child, all but one arm, was entirely

covered by that of the donkey, was certain that the boy lay dead underneath.

By this time Philip's parents had arrived on the scene, and, like the woman, believing him dead, began weeping bitterly. But what was their joy when they succeeded in reaching him to find him safe and sound. The Saint never forgot that day.

Philip lived under the roof of his father and mother until he was eighteen years of age. During all that time he never once disobeyed his parents. It was a Christian household, and the pure and serene air which filled it cheered and gladdened every one who dwelt within its walls. And now he stood upon the threshold of manhood. Beautiful and winning in person, clever and sprightly in mind, it has been said of him that as a boy he possessed "a manliness of demeanor and a quickness of spirit, with the

eyes of an angel just from Paradise.” About this time the father of Philip began to think of a career for his son. A proposal was made to him which seemed both good and timely. A relative of the Neris living at San Germano, near Monte Cassino, had acquired great wealth in his business, but had no children. He wrote to ask that Philip be sent to him, in order to assist him in his business and inherit his property. Both the boy and his parents were pleased with this offer, and Philip was at once made ready for the journey. At that time, in all the world, there was no city more beautiful than that of Florence. There Philip had been born and nurtured, he loved every stone of its streets, its grand churches with their beautiful statues and shrines, its galleries of sculpture and paintings, its tasteful gardens and terraces, its convents and monasteries —

it was his home. He was leaving behind him a fond father and mother, two fair and gentle sisters, everything that made life dear. He probably hoped at some future time to revisit his native city, but though San Germano was only three hundred and fifty miles from Florence, travel was not so common in those days as now, and besides circumstances ordained that it should be out of his power to return. He never saw his home again.

His cousin was a cloth merchant. When Philip arrived at San Germano, he was warmly welcomed. He began to learn the ways of commerce. But instead of becoming less pious by reason of his attention to business, Philip daily grew to love God more and more. While his cousin was congratulating himself that his old age would be cheered and his property taken care of by the boy he had brought from Florence, Philip

had already begun to conceive the desire of consecrating himself to God.

Not far from the port of Gaeta, about fifteen miles from San Germano, a hill rises steep and abrupt from the sea. On this point is built the Church of the Holy Trinity, and still higher, reached by thirty-five bars of iron riveted in the side of the mountain, stands the Chapel of the Holy Cross. It is a place especially dear to sailors, as the light can be seen far out on the ocean. To this shrine Philip often went to pray, and it was there that he decided to give himself wholly and without reserve to God.

When he told his cousin of what he had resolved to do, the good man was both grieved and surprised — all his plans were upset. He begged Philip to consider what he was putting away from him — wealth, ease, and position.

He also placed before him the sorrow

and disappointment of his parents, but the youth was firm. He had chosen God for his sole end and Poverty for his wife, children, and friend. Nothing could change him, and so one day he bade adieu to his cousin and started for Rome, where he began his life as one of the poor of Christ, and nothing more.

It does not appear that he had any intention of entering a religious order. He wanted leisure to reflect, and for this reason took lodging in the house of a Florentine gentleman named Callia. Here he devoted nearly all his time, for the space of two years, to the study of Christian Doctrine. At the same time he was accustomed to gather the little children about him, teaching and instructing them. We are told that he lived upon the charity of Signor Callia, and that he ate scarcely enough to keep body and soul together. But it is prob-

able that the good gentleman did not consider Philip an object of charity, as he taught his two children, who both afterwards became priests.

When Philip was twenty-three, he began to visit the hospitals. At that time it was not usual for laymen to do so. But as Philip had also begun to make friends among the young men of Rome who were piously inclined, they also followed him to the hospitals, and besides doing good to their sick and dying fellow creatures, their intercourse with Philip was of great benefit to themselves. His purity and holiness shone in his face, clothing his whole person with beauty, and attracting all those with whom he associated.

Thus he lived for sixteen years, a layman, till at length his confessor persuaded him to become a priest. Philip did not think himself worthy of so high an honor,

but he was well prepared for it by the charity, purity, and piety of his life.

Soon after his ordination he was commanded by his Superior to hear confessions, and so well had his life in the world prepared him for this, that he found himself surrounded by penitents from early morning till late at night. He could pierce the most secret chambers of the soul, and often told persons of shameful sins which they were about to conceal though on their knees in the confessional. He was also in the habit of giving conferences in his own room to young men, which soon gave rise to the necessity of a larger place, as his room could not contain the crowds who came to hear him.

This it was which caused him to found the Congregation of the Oratorians,—priests devoted to prayer and preaching. They were not bound by vows, but lived

together, and had but one purse. Into this community came many learned and virtuous men, giving up worldly wealth and honor in order to follow their Father Philip, whom they loved and desired to imitate.

St. Philip was fond of gathering children around him and taking them for a walk, at the end of which there was singing and a short sermon. These meetings always began in the Spring, when the air was fresh and balmy. Philip was the central figure in the midst of his boys; his winning ways, the love that beamed in his eyes, and his cheerful talk made them look upon these delightful outings as some of the most pleasant happenings in their lives. Ardent and restless as they might be, a mere sign from "Father Philip" was enough to quiet the noisiest among them.

He would begin a game of quoits or

tennis with them, and after he had it well started would retire to read some pious book. But as soon as they called him to settle some dispute or decide some question, he was at their service, putting up with all their childish pranks for the sake of keeping them near him. When the winter time arrived, and it was no longer possible for them to play outside, he welcomed them to his room, and would allow them to make what noise they pleased at the very door. Sometimes the Fathers or the lay brothers would scold them, but they always ran to St. Philip, sure that he would protect them, and he was wont to say, "Let them grumble as much as they like, my dear boys; go on and be as merry as you please; all I want is that you should not sin against God." And the Saint had his reward. He could do anything he wished with his boys.

Above all things he urged them never to be idle, as he considered idleness the root of all evil. When they were tired of play he would set them to clean his room, or arrange his books, or string rosaries, or read. He required them to go to confession often; and it was a very beautiful sight to see them drop down at his knee to recite the simple record of their boyish sins and temptations.

One day a friend said to him, "Father Philip, how can you bear to have such a noisy troop of boys around you all the time?"

"If I only can keep them from sin, they are welcome to chop wood on my back," said St. Philip.

At the same time he never lost any occasion of mingling good counsel with amusement. He would say to them, "Shun evil company, and do not be too fond of dainties." With regard to purity

he used to impress upon them these words, "In all other temptations he who fights wins the victory, but in this temptation it is he who runs away."

If sometimes, as boys will, they found themselves engaged in conversation of which they thought St. Philip might not approve, they would say to one another, "We must be careful not to say anything Father Philip would not like, because he will be sure to know it if we do."

St. Philip was always very much annoyed when people came to see him because they had heard of his great sanctity. He was the most humble of men, thinking himself a great sinner. Very often, on such occasions as these, his visitors left him with the impression that they had been calling upon a very foolish man instead of a saintly one.

Two great personages once came to

see him through curiosity, and Philip at once divined their motive. They wanted to see a saint, and hear him speak of things divine.

When Philip heard they were coming, he bade some one who was in the room begin to read aloud from a book of jests and fables he always kept on the table for that purpose. After he had saluted the visitors, Polish nobles, he said to them, "Excuse me a moment until this fable is finished." When the story was completed he continued, "You see I always contrive to keep good books about me, and have matters of importance read to me." The visitors stared in amazement and took their departure. Philip was delighted with the success of his stratagem and said, "There, we have done all that was necessary for the present."

St. Philip had the happy faculty of impressing great truths on the minds of

those who came to him, by means of examples and illustrations.

On one occasion a woman asked to see him. "Father," she said, "I am in great distress of mind."

"What is it, my child?" asked Philip.

"I have an enemy, and she had done spiteful things to me. I wanted to be even with her, in my anger, so I invented a story — a very bad one, and related it to one or two of my neighbors.

"For some time I had not been to confession, but in my parish the Fathers have been preaching, and so I went to the Sacraments. The priest told me that the sin of slander was so great he did not know what penance to give me, so he bade me come to you and said you would show me how I could repair the evil I had done."

Philip reflected.

"Go, my daughter," he said at last. "Buy a fowl in the market, and pluck

it as you go up and down the street, till the last feather is gone, and then return to me."

The woman obeyed the Saint, and returned in the afternoon.

"Father, I have done what you ordered me to do," she said.

"Go now and pick up each feather you have dropped," said the Saint.

"But, Father, that would be impossible. What is so light as a feather, blown by every gust of wind this way and that? How could I find them along the busy, crowded streets?"

"True, my child," answered St. Philip, stroking his beard. "But so it is with slander. It travels fast, it flies hither and thither. Once scattered, it can never be brought back. You slandered your neighbor. The one to whom you told the lie had a friend, who also repeated it. That friend had a friend, and so on. The injury

you have done can never be entirely repaired any more than the feathers you have dropped on the wayside can be gathered together. But you have shown a disposition to do the best thing possible to you. Go now in peace, and may God keep you from ever again injuring the good name of your neighbor."

About a year before the death of St. Philip he was very ill, and it was thought the time had come for him to leave this world. His companions of the Oratory and other friends were gathered about him, awaiting the sad moment when he should breathe his last. The Saint was lying with closed eyes, his pulse scarcely beating, when suddenly he cried out in a loud, clear voice: "He who desires anything but God deceives himself utterly. He who loves aught but God errs miserably."

Again there was silence, and after a

brief pause he continued: "Ah, my *Madonna Santissima*, my beautiful Madonna, my blessed Madonna." Then he held out his arms and seemed to be lifted up from the bed.

Again opening his arms, he exclaimed, with many tears: "No, I am not worthy. Who am I, O my dear Madonna, that thou shouldst come to see me? O Virgin most beautiful and most pure, I do not deserve so great a grace. Ah! why art thou come to me, the least and lowest of thy servants? Who am I? O holiest Virgin! O Mother of God! O thou blessed among women!" Then, observing the wondering faces around him, Philip asked, "Did you not see the Mother of God come to visit me and take away my pains? I do not need you any longer," he said to his physicians. "The *Madonna Santissima* has come to me and cured me."

It was true; he had been restored to perfect health.

St. Philip lived nearly a year after this. On the last day of his life he said Mass and appeared unusually well. But in the middle of that night he had an attack which alarmed the Fathers; they sent for the physician, who told them he was dying.

With tears and sobs, they knelt around his bed. The Saint lay motionless, his eyes closed, his hands lightly folded on his bosom. At length his friend and loving disciple, Baronio, unable any longer to restrain himself, cried out in an appealing voice: "Father, Father, are you then leaving us without a word? We entreat you give us at least your blessing!" The Saint, brought back from the very gates of Heaven by the voice of love, once more opened his eyes upon this weary world, looked about him

with a gentle smile, and softly moved his hand as if in blessing; then without other sign or motion he heaved one long sigh and quietly fell asleep in the Lord. Many wonders were wrought at his tomb.

There was a noble Florentine, Nero del Nero, who had been a devoted friend of St. Philip. He was a very rich man, but had no son, and after the death of Philip he prayed daily that God might grant him a child. In the meantime he caused a most beautiful tomb or chapel to be built, and had the body of the Saint placed in a coffin of silver and laid in this chapel. And then God granted him the desire of his heart, — a little son, to whom he gave the name of Philip.

When this child was eighteen months old he fell ill; the doctors said his case was hopeless. The poor father threw himself upon his bed, crying out in the anguish

of his heart, "Ah! my blessed Father Philip, must it then be that the first thing I do in your chapel will be to bury my little Philip there, my only son, whom I owe to your intercession?"

He had scarcely said these words when the dying child exclaimed three or four times, "Papa, papa, I am cured, my *nonno* has made me well." He had been taught to call St. Philip his *nonno*, or god-father. The cure had really been effected. The child told those about him that the Saint, whose picture was hung on the wall, had come and laid his blessed hand on his head while his father was crying in the next room. He fell asleep after this, and awoke quite well and strong.

St. Philip has been called the Saint of the children, and in Italy, to this day, it is quite a common thing in many households to see his picture as a

child exposed for the veneration of the little ones, who call him, lovingly, "*Pippo buono*, the good Pippo." The Feast of St. Philip Neri is celebrated on the 26th of **May.**



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Mannix, Mary E.

AUTHOR

Illustrated Lives of Patron Saints

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